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A NARROW AX

IN BIBLICAL CRITICISM

✓ BY
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Mutabo pro causa.

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PREFACE.

WE did a deal of work in the old barn floor on cold winter days—made nearly all the tools used in carrying on a farm whose working power was represented by four or six oxen—carts, sleds, drags, harrows. Sometimes we got out the frame of a new house or barn or shed. A log was rolled into the floor, or cut in on skids with pry or crowbar, blocked up and trigged. Then the chalk line was snapped along the top on the two sides, and a man mounted the log to cut in, along at intervals, with a narrow ax, to the chalk line. That done, the outside to the depth of the cuttings was chipped off, and the log began to take the square shape for further work to the end designed.

Many serviceable farm implements have been made with no tools but a narrow ax, an auger, chisel and mallet—implements by which the struggle for existence was successfully carried on, a family fed, clothed, schooled, and perhaps a boy sent to college.

Whereto this parable?

The following pages are analogous, in Biblical study and criticism, to the processes of the old barn floor. They are a thing of narrow axes, cross-cut saws, chalk lines, mallets and chisels.

So far as the discussions are critical they may be considered as evolutions of the narrow ax.

But why ask any one to read the result of work so crude? Well, as in the former case, a *living* may be got with coarse tools—and a *living* means a good deal here as well as there. I have had to get my living (*spiritualiter dicitur*) out of the ground herein tilled, by the use of such tools as came to hand. I have done it (again *spiritualiter dicitur*) with a fair result of comfort to myself—so I could sleep nights after my day's work was done.

Much herein was thought out and wrought out years ago. I have corrected from time to time as I have had occasion for use. That process of correction would probably go on without limit. But as the problems stand before my mind at this date, I am reasonably satisfied with the conclusions herein set forth.

My work will be of no service to experts in Biblical criticism, but it may be helpful to some who may wish to work a little further along than they are toward the solution of problems that tax all minds.

The most I wish to assert in my justification, is, that I think somewhere in the direction in which I go, will results, fairly restful, be found.

C. CAVERNO.

Boulder, Colorado, 1896.

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A NARROW AX IN BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

I.

THE REVELATION.

CHAPTERS I.—XI.

I MARVEL that the Revelation is not a more popular book than it is, that is, that it is not in more familiar use both for moral and literary purposes, for spiritual comfort and intellectual quickening. Not even all the darkness that has been shed upon it by the innumerable multitude, from saints to cranks, birds of dole and omen, who have acted as commentators upon and interpreters of it, ought to have consigned it to the obscurity in which it seems to be.

It ought to be a book of vision, of inspiration and comfort to the Christian, and it ought to rank as a masterpiece in literature. Yet am I mistaken in the assertion that it has fallen and is falling into neglect and disuse? This might

be a hopeful sign, for it might signify only the decay of belief in it as a prospective conjuring book of the history of the nations; it might signify only the lull, the mental indifference, which marks a period of mental transition, from systems of thought over-worn and unsatisfactory, to something enclosing within itself a living interest.

Should that be the case, the present indifference can be tolerated. But I feel so sure that the kind of thought, heretofore connected with this book, has no natural connection with it, that I am anxious to hasten the day when it shall become again, as it undoubtedly was to the generation for which it was written, an apocalypse—an opening—a revelation—to the mind that reads it.

The main help one needs in studying the Revelation is the New Version; then the Greek text, if one can compass it. The New Version is a great improvement on the Old. Commentators as a rule are to be discarded. This is not to say that there are no commentators who are a help towards the proper understanding of the Revelation. It is simply to say that with rare exceptions they have not been a help, but

have been a hindrance. To give this caution is far from saying that a man should sit down and construct his own system of interpretation from the King James or the New Version or the Greek text. Perhaps the difficulty has been that we have had too much of that kind of work. No book in the Scripture needs more broad and general scholarship to secure its comprehension than this.

The man who can get into the general system of thought of Jew and Gentile—who can understand the course of mind in the day when this book was written, has the help of the first importance, beyond the text, in the elucidation of the meaning of the Apocalypse.

What John saw with his open eyes—for he had an open eye—in the world round about him is the key to what he painted by his imagination, or by an inspiration that filled in and gave color and life to what imagination limned. So it is not less but more of learning that is wanted for a full treatment of this book. The difficulty has been that men, from the time of the early fathers through the middle ages to these later days, have superimposed their visions—what they could see through wooden eyes—upon the

vision of John. Why it is better to take the text than almost any commentary that is likely to fall into your hands, is that so you are very much more likely to come nearer to the vision of John—you have only your own imagination to curb or regulate—your own disposition to set up a system of thought for John—to restrain.

Without arguing the question, it may be stated that the Johannean authorship of the Apocalypse is herein assumed.

Further, the treatment will follow the method of division of the book into two sections—the first section consisting of the first eleven chapters, the last section comprising the remainder of the book. Whoever will take the pains to read the Apocalypse will see that this division is inherent in its structure—that it lay in the mind of the author. It will be evident also that in the first section the author's vision hovers over moral forces and events seen from a Jewish basis; in the second section it falls on them in a Roman field.

The book is a "revelation," given to show unto the servants of God "things which must come shortly to pass." It was given, primarily, for the help of those in the immediate day and

generation of its composition. It was to aid them in the elucidation of problems which were then pressing upon their minds, problems of practical perplexity, of the Spirit's agency. Now consider how utterly useless the prevalent notion, that this book is an outline of secular history for all coming time, would have made the book to the church at the close of the first century. It is the problem that presses upon your own mind now that is of interest to you. What do you care about the problems that are to press upon somebody else five hundred or three thousand years from this time? "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." The coming generations, with the assistance of God, will take care of their own problems.

For you your question is, what is the immediate outlook for the church? Is it to be swamped beneath a tide of luxury and poverty and materialism? Will the next generation fear God and keep his commandments as earnestly as the last? What is the immediate outlook for the people of this country? Shall we get through presidential elections safely? Shall we in our generation escape serious conflict between capitalists and wage-workers? And so

on. Your interest in such questions for the future dies out just according as the questions recede in the distance of time.

So you may take the questions that pertain to other countries and peoples. You want to know what is to be the outcome of the present Eastern question, not of one that may exist over the same ground five hundred years to come. You want to know what will be the result of Stanley's expedition across Africa; what will be done about the slave trade; what England will do with Egypt and Uganda, what with the Irish questions; what the United States will do with Hawaii; whether the nations of Europe will arm or disarm. You have no great interest in possible commotions in Africa or Europe or America two thousand years hence. It is the things that "must shortly come to pass" which always press the most intense interest upon us.

Now certainly a Christian, toward the close of the first century, must have been deeply anxious over the horoscope of his immediate future.

The religion to which he had given his adhesion had come to draw upon itself the attention of the secular powers which ruled the world. A conflict was inevitable—a conflict had begun.

Who is the ruler of the world—God or Cæsar? If Cæsar, in the long-sufferance of God, seems to have the domination now, is that domination to last? If one goes down to death for the faith here, what then? What is beyond? Are there any compensations for faithfulness unto death? To what does one go who endures martyrdom? Questions of that sort—and surely they were of terrible import—were of practical interest in the latter days of the Apostle John. The Roman government seems to have had its iron hand on him when he was in Patmos. Then the faith in which the Jewish Christian had been born, the faith of his fathers, was a worn out affair and wrath was impending over his own kith and kin, if it had not already descended in the fearful destruction of the sacred city—Jerusalem. But the Jewish people were as hostile to the new faith as the Gentiles. Did Cæsar persecute, so did the synagogue and the temple. Turn whichever way the Christian might, the powers of the earth were against him. What should he do? Was it worth while to face a struggle in which all the odds, so far as the forces of the world were concerned, were against him? Why die when he could recant and live? There is a

glimpse of the problem that lay before the mind of John.

His design is to strengthen, to encourage the disciple of Christ to stand fast in the faith, to establish his belief that God has a kingdom in which the disciple will reign triumphant, if his faith fails not under persecution; to convince him that the powers of earth hostile to him, though they might triumph for a time here, were hastening to corruption and destruction—to an awful overthrow, in which he will assuredly have part if he denies the faith and becomes allied with the doomed powers of sin. *That* is the moral intent of the revelation of John. There is no mistaking it, there is no possibility of confusion here. To strengthen the moral purpose of his brethren in Christ, as they were then tempted to renounce the faith, in face of all the persecuting forces arrayed against them is the central thought, the central purpose of John.

Take that common refrain of the epistles to the seven churches; you can work out much by asking yourselves why "He that overcometh" is made a common refrain. There was a condition of things which supported it—a condition of awful moral significance. But run over that refrain

as it is repeated, and see what immeasurable power of moral leverage over tempted souls John gets out of it.

Overcome—die if necessary to overcome—and you “shall eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” Overcome—die if you must to overcome—and you “shall not be hurt of the second death.” Recant, if you choose, to save your life and your bread, but so you can never “eat of the hidden manna” which is reserved for the faithful. In the trouble that is to come upon the whole world to try them that dwell upon the earth, overcome, and “I will make of you a pillar in the temple of my God.” Sits Cæsar on a throne and orders you to death; overcome, and the throne of Cæsar shall become a dunghill in comparison with that to which you shall be exalted—“I will give you to sit down with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in his throne.” Fear not the throne of Cæsar, courage will make you a partner in the power which proceeds from the throne of the Lord God Almighty. Can you not see how the enforcement of this thought would make a church of victors, of heroic martyrs, if martyr-

dom came? Now the rest of the book is simply picture painting, parable adjuvant to this main moral purpose. It is to be interpreted along moral lines just as much as a parable of the Saviour. The kingdom of heaven is like thus and so according to both. It is as pertinent to raise the historic question when it was that a woman lighted a candle and searched through the house for a piece of lost money, or when it was that a merchant made his voyage for goodly pearls, or when it was that a man sowed wheat and an enemy sowed tares in his field, as it is to ask for a historic fulfillment of these paintings of John illustrative of the struggle of moral forces, illustrative of his faith and of the faith of all Christians in the ultimate dominance of the kingdom of God. There is another broad view quite evident to one who will keep the whole section, covered by the letters, together before his mind. It is drawn from a Jewish point of observation and was evidently intended to do work with Jewish mind. The letters to the churches are addressed to churches in Gentile cities, to be sure, but there was a Jewish element in those churches. It would seem that the Jewish element predominated. The cast of the

letters, while true enough to the moral needs of minds of all nationalities, is yet of Jewish tone and abounds in references and illustrations more particularly adapted to Jews.

The "candlestick," the "synagogue," "Balaam," "Balak," "Jezebel," the "vessels of the potter broken to shivers," "Jews that are not Jews" but "of the synagogue of Satan," the "temple of my God," the "new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God"—such allusions identify the mind to which the letters were more particularly addressed. Then the high water mark of the author's power is reached in the description of the sealing of the one hundred and forty-four thousand out of the tribes of Israel, and of the adoration of God consequent thereon. True, engaged in that adoration was a "great multitude which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues." But this multitude constitutes the background into which the picture fades in the distance. Israel holds the foreground. The pomp and circumstance and particularization in the action come out over the saved of Israel. Then when the forces of evil have wrought their will, when "the mystery of iniquity" (to bor-

row language from Paul) is accomplished, when the "woes" come, work and glide past, the whole action comes to final pause in a vision which could have its full significance only to a Jewish eye and be fully appreciated by a Jewish heart. The drama is completed and the curtain falls on this vision: "And there was opened the temple of God that is in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his covenant." The temple and the ark of the covenant! How dear they were to the Jew! All his notions of sacredness in religion, all the pride of his patriotism centered on them. They were to disappear, from the earth, perhaps had already disappeared, but the Jew would find his consolation in the assurance that they were opened on high. You can find in this book that double Israel which is seen throughout all the old prophets—a righteous Israel persecuted, suffering, yet reaching its crown of Divine destiny under the administration of the Messiah and the Lamb; an evil Israel persecuting, doomed to captivity and destruction; a righteous servant, meek, enduring, smitten and afflicted, making his grave with the wicked, yet seeing his seed and satisfied; slain, yet preserved under the very altar of the living

God; tortured, yet God wipes away all tears from his eyes and he reigns forever and ever. Into which complications and contradictions prophets and kings have desired to look, yet have never attained that clearness of vision which it is ours to enjoy.

We must not leave untouched the probable moral effect of John's work on a persecuted Jewish Christian. Whether he should hold to the Christian faith under its trials or give up that faith and go back to the faith of his fathers, or rather go over from the persecuted to the persecuting side, *that* must have been the question with which a Jew had to struggle. Now read again the whole section and ask yourself what effect it must have had on the mind of the tempted, questioning Jew. To which Israel shall he belong—to that which has the seal of God in its forehead, or to that which, though a dominant force, is yet to be trodden out under foot of the woes executive of the wrath of God; to the Israel "singing the new song," from whose eyes God would wipe away all tears, or to the Israel hiding in the caves and the rocks of the mountains and saying to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the

face of him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb;" to the Israel who clung with frantic ardor to the temple on earth, only to be overwhelmed with it in its ruin, or to him who stretched out his hands to the temple seen on high wherein salvation dwelt? It cannot but be that many a pious soul in Israel, pursuing the line of these visions, struck the high road of the moral heroism which overcame all doubts and fears and gave to him, though suffering martyrdom, the consciousness of holding the victor's palm.

So stands the account with the section we have before us as to moral intent, and influence in the day of its production.

The interpretation of the symbolism of John is not difficult. Take any symbolism and turn it into its moral or spiritual equivalent. For instance, take the Lamb; it is easy enough to get a proper conception of the meaning of that symbol. Take the delineation in the first chapter of the "one in the midst of the candlesticks like unto a son of man," and you have item after item indicative of majesty. Take the last description of the Saviour in the nineteenth chapter, as the warrior upon the white horse, and

“the wayfaring man though a fool ought not to err therein.” It is as easy of interpretation as the parable of the ten talents. Much of the symbolism may not be so easy of resolution. But we cannot go far astray if we assume it all to be “aids to reflection” on spiritual operations and forces. There is prognostication about this symbolism, but it relates not to secular events. It is of that moral cast whose certainties are found by detecting the lines of the gravitation of righteousness and sin.

We must not leave this section without giving attention to its literary merits. As to form of composition, the Revelation is drama. But it is drama of peculiar kind. It is a drama executed by painting, a drama whose action is carried along in its stage scenery.

The spoken words are often few. You must get the onflow of the action from the painting on the curtains or the scenes which one after another are slid along before your view. The art is mimetic, imitative. You have a pantomime—as near as words can do it—a show of all that is done. The actors come forth and do. They do not tell what they are going to do, nor does any one tell what they have done. The trumpets

come forth and sound. You see the trumpeters and you see the effects following. You see the smoke come out of the pit—you see its impalpable dust collect in points of locust size, you see the locusts grow till they become like unto horses prepared for war, armored and falling into line under the command of their abysmal king, Abaddon. Words are few, action has the field. When the words of actors come they are rather refrains in a movement than agents in the progress of the action. True to the Hebrew genius, the exhibitions are repetitive, reinforcing the same principle by action detailed in another way. This is seen in the case of the trumpeters in this section and in that of the angels with the vials or bowls in the second section. We ought to cultivate our imaginations to reproduce for us the scenes in the drama. Again and again for the theater's arch we shall need the whole opposing front of the heavens from horizon to zenith. The arch will be filled with action as we sometimes see it to be in an exhibition of northern lights. If the stars are falling, or an angel is flying in mid heaven, do not hesitate to make your theater for the scenic action as large as John made it. John is imaginative everywhere.

With him numbers are rhetoric—they designate no exact facts. Witness “the seven spirits of God” and “the twelve thousand sealed” from every tribe of Israel. How little John cares for particulars may be seen from the fact that the tribes of Dan and Ephraim are not mentioned. Manasseh is mentioned and then “the tribe of Joseph.” You will never find a guide who will take your imagination on more daring flights than John. You will not find a vision which is not grand throughout and which does not sustain its grandeur. To our notions, educated as we are only along the line of the Greek genius for harmony, the appearance of the first character coming on the stage of the Revelation is weird and strange. Think of the contrast, however, between one whose form is made up of so many symbols of majesty and him who was laid lifeless in the rock-hewn tomb. Dismiss notions of Greek æsthetics and work up along the lines of moral significance and we have in that representation of “one whose head and hair were white as white wool and whose eyes were as a flame of fire” a figure of surprising moral grandeur. It will be a new sensation to realize that moral powers can thus be depicted, thus made

to be seen. This is high art. But there is a higher art still—the art that does not paint—the art that suggests. It is said that speech is silver but that silence is golden. John is daring, but there are themes beyond the compass of his art, and he knows those themes—knows how to allude to them and pass without elaboration.

Taine's criticism of Milton is that he has made out of God, presiding in the councils of heaven, an English baron. Michael Angelo spread on the dome of St. Peter's a representation of God launching the creation and overseeing its operations. That was a daring effort of genius. But the criticism is made, and it must be just, that, in giving form to the Almighty, Angelo's work is after all a degradation of our ideal of God. Now see how John manages the same matter Milton and Angelo have treated. "Behold, there was a throne set in heaven and one sitting upon the throne, and he that sat was to look upon like jasper stone and a sardius, and there was a rainbow round about the throne like an emerald to look upon." There you have just an indication that there was an occupant of the throne, but there is no description of the indescribable. A ray or two only of the effulgence from the Di-

vine splendor is caught and fixed. There is a gleam, a flash of light, bright and beautiful as a reflection from a jewel, jasper or sardius; beyond that, imagination is free. You are left there alone. The artist has withdrawn his brush. Where others have failed John has not. He has not compelled the illimitable into limits. A ray or two of the Divine glory is caught. But the golden silence of tongue and brush is preserved respecting the infinite beauty and majesty of the all-glorious. But where John has painted, his work is as far beyond criticism as in the case of refusal to express the ineffable. John does dare to paint the throne and its surroundings, if he pauses in silent, helpless awe before him who sitteth thereon.

All forces, physical, intellectual and moral, support the throne or render tribute to it. The "four living creatures," representative of intelligence and might, the "four and twenty elders," representative of religious and spiritual powers, are all in harmony one with another and under harmonious service to the Supreme Majesty. John has seen far enough into the government of God to represent these agencies as forever active. There are no spent forces about God's

throne—no idle powers, once used, then cast aside. The powers look everywhere, they cover all points of the compass and all things lie within the range of their numberless, inspecting eyes. All things are in motion about the throne and all filled with the spirit of adoration.

“And the four living creatures have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, which was and which is and which is to come. And when the living creatures shall give glory and honor and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne, to him that liveth forever and ever, the four and twenty elders shall fall down before him that sitteth on the throne, and shall worship him that liveth forever and ever, and shall cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for thou didst create all things and because of thy will they were, and were created.”

It is said that science is making the Biblical conceptions of God tame, flat, beneath the dignity of the subject. It may be safely said that no science, no combination of sciences has reduced in rank the conceptions of John respecting

the throne of the universe and Him that sitteth thereon. All man's knowledge to the end of time will find setting in John's picture.

Wide comparison will bring out the superior (shall we not say supreme?) literary excellence of the Revelation. We know what a masterpiece of eloquence is. We have read the oration of Lincoln at Gettysburg; we remember the solidity and solemnity of Webster, as in *The Reply to Hayne*, and in passages in the orations on Adams and Jefferson, and on the dedication of the Bunker Hill monument; and we recall *The Eulogy of Choate on Webster*; but the long roll of mortal speech is sounded with no fuller tone than in many passages of the Revelation. Take this from Chapter vii., after the sealing of the one hundred and forty-four thousand:

“After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes and palms in their hands; and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God which sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb. And all the angels were standing round about the throne and

about the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever."

Take this from Chapter xi., where the action of the whole drama comes to final summary: "And the seventh angel sounded, and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever. And the four and twenty elders which sit before God on their thrones fell upon their faces and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, Lord God, the Almighty, which art and which wast, because thou hast taken thy great power and didst reign. And the nations were wroth, and thy wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to thy servants the prophets and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, the small and the great; and to destroy them that destroy the earth."

Milton has attempted some of these pictures; let us look at one;

“No sooner had the Almighty ceased but all
The multitude of angels, with a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices uttering joy, Heaven rung
With jubilee, and loud Hosannas filled
The eternal regions; lowly reverent
Towards either throne they bow, and to the
ground,
With solemn adoration, down they cast
Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold.”

That may be finished, but as for power it follows John with unequal steps, and by a long interval. If there is the sedateness of dignity in Milton, there is action living, tense, quivering with passion in John.

You know how a drama turns off its final action. Flourish of trumpets; discharge of musketry; salvo of artillery; “*Exeunt omnes.*” Compare that with the final action in John’s drama.

Last scene: “And there was opened the temple of God that is in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his covenant. And there followed lightnings and voices and thunders, and an earthquake and great hail.”

II.

THE REVELATION.

CHAPTERS XII.—XXII.

Two principles are to be kept firmly in mind in reading the book of the Revelation; the one is that, if we wish to understand the book, we must reconstruct and reproduce the history of the times in which it was written; the other is that, if we regard the book as prophetic, vaticinal in character, we must look for its proleptic grasp on the future along the operations of moral forces to moral results. The book is no more an outline of national and secular history in the ages before it to come than the first Psalm or the Beatitudes is such an outline.

If we hold fast these principles we can construe (shall I say reconstruct?) this book to healthful religious uses. If we do not hold these principles we shall drop down to the level of that degradation which has brooded so long and so

heavily over it and made it the ready reckoner of the fortunes of the nations—the political conjuring book of superstition and ignorance. In literary form this second part follows close upon the mode of development in the first section. You need the same great celestial stage on which to see its action deployed. As in the first section, so here repetition is brought in to display, in all ways imaginable, the great elements of retribution upon wickedness and reward to righteousness. As there in the case of the trumpeters, witness here what comes in the train of the seven angels with the seven bowls out of which is poured the wrath of God.

The last half of the book of Revelation is an outlook over the then existing and prospective moral situation from a point of observation inside the power and influence of the Roman Empire, as the former half had been an outlook from a base in the old Jewish regime. This latter half in its main drift follows so closely on the condition of things in the Roman Empire made known to us in history—in fact identifies itself, with such express purpose and so clearly, with that condition, that we need have little difficulty in its interpretation. I want to make

a statement radical enough to attract attention. We can read the Revelation in the history of Rome. It is not so marvelous and mystical an affair then as we have thought. Nay, more—for I wish to be more radical still—we can read the Revelation in particular pieces of Roman literature. In fact, we have a Roman and heathen Revelation parallel to the Christian. You can put them side by side and read from the one to the other. Take the correspondence between Pliny the younger and the Emperor Trajan; that will redeem to you the statement that we can read the last half of the Revelation out of heathen Latin literature.

If these comprehensive (do you say extravagant?) statements need modification and elucidation, then I will say that the correspondence between Pliny and Trajan discloses such a state of affairs on the heathen side, in the Roman Empire, as will compel the production of the Revelation to set forth the thought and feeling that are at work on the Christian side. The Revelation interprets this correspondence, and this correspondence interprets the Revelation. Whether you take the earlier or the later date for the origin of the Revelation, will make no

difference. This Book and this correspondence are substantially contemporary. They came out of influences and events which the same generation felt and observed. The reign of Trajan, as you remember, made the crossing from the first to the second century; beginning in 98 and reaching to 117 A. D.

Pliny was sent by Trajan as proconsul to the province of Bithynia in Asia Minor. This province lay south of the Black Sea, at its western extremity. You remember it is said, Paul "assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered him not." The vision of the beckoning Macedonian took him into Europe. But, though Paul did not go to Bithynia, Christianity somehow did, and that too at an early date in its history, for when Pliny was there he found perverts from Christianity whose apostasy had been of twenty years' standing.

We will turn to the correspondence.

PLINY TO TRAJAN.

"It is a rule, sir, which I invariably observe, to refer myself to you in all my doubts; for who is more capable of removing my scruples or informing my ignorance? Having never been

present at any trials concerning those who profess Christianity, I am unacquainted not only with the nature of their crimes, or the measure of their punishment, but how far it is proper to enter into an examination concerning them. Whether, therefore, any difference is usually made with respect to the ages of the guilty, or no distinction is to be observed between the young and the adult; whether repentance entitles them to a pardon; or if a man has been once a Christian, it avails nothing to desist from his error; whether the very profession of Christianity, unattended with any criminal act, or only the crimes themselves inherent in the profession are punishable; in all these points I am greatly doubtful. In the meanwhile the method I have observed towards those who have been brought before me as Christians, is this: I interrogated them whether they were Christians; if they confessed I repeated the question twice again, adding threats at the same time; when, if they still persevered, I ordered them to be immediately punished; for I was persuaded, whatever the nature of their opinions might be, a contumacious and inflexible obstinacy certainly deserved correction.

“There were others also brought before me possessed with the same infatuation, but being citizens of Rome, I directed them to be carried thither. But this crime spreading (as is usually the case) while it was actually under prosecution, several instances of the same nature occurred. An information was presented to me without any name subscribed, containing a charge against several persons who, upon examination, denied they were Christians or had ever been so. They repeated after me an invocation to the gods, and offered religious rites with wine and frankincense before your statue (which for the purpose I had ordered to be brought, together with those of the gods), and even reviled the name of Christ; whereas there is no forcing, it is said, those who are really Christians, into a compliance with any of these articles: I thought proper, therefore, to discharge them. Some among those who were accused by a witness in person, at first confessed themselves Christians, but immediately after denied it; while the rest owned indeed that they had been of that number formerly, but had now (some above three, others more, and a few above twenty years ago) forsaken that error. They all wor-

shipped your statue and the images of the gods, throwing out imprecations at the same time against the name of Christ. They affirmed, the whole of their guilt, or their error, was, that they met on a certain stated day before it was light, and addressed themselves in a form of prayer to Christ, as to some god, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for the purpose of any wicked design, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which, it was the custom to separate, and then reassemble, to eat in common a harmless meal. From this custom, however, they desisted after the publication of my edict, by which, according to your orders, I forbade the meeting of any assemblies. After receiving this account, I judged it so much the more necessary to endeavor to extort the real truth, by putting two female slaves to the torture, who were said to administer in their religious functions; but I could discover nothing more than an absurd and excessive superstition. I thought proper, therefore, to adjourn all further proceedings in this affair, in order to consult with you. For it appears to be a matter highly

deserving your consideration; more especially as great numbers must be involved in the danger of these prosecutions; this inquiry having already extended, and being still likely to extend to persons of all ranks and ages, and even of both sexes. For this contagious superstition is not confined to the cities only, but has spread its infection among the country villages. Nevertheless, it still seems possible to remedy this evil and restrain its progress. The temples, at least, which were almost deserted, begin now to be frequented; and the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are again revived; while there is a general demand for the victims, which for some time past have met with but few purchasers. From hence it is easy to imagine what numbers might be reclaimed from this error, if a pardon were granted to those who shall repent."

TRAJAN TO PLINY.

"The method you have pursued, my dear Pliny, against those Christians which were brought before you, is extremely proper; as it is not possible to lay down any fixed plan by which to act in all cases of this nature. But I

would not have you officiously enter into any enquiries concerning them. If indeed they should be brought before you, and the crime is proved, they must be punished; with the restriction, however, that when the party denies himself to be a Christian, and shall make it evident that he is not, by invoking our gods, let him (notwithstanding any former suspicion) be pardoned upon his repentance. Informations without the accuser's name subscribed, ought not to be received in prosecutions of any sort, as it is introducing a very dangerous precedent and by no means agreeable to the equity of my government."

When Pagans write in that way, Christians will write the Revelation. There is an issue joined and an "irrepressible conflict" upon it. This correspondence shows you the pagan side in power and carrying repressive measures against Christianity to torture and to death.

Now let us turn to see how John will treat such condition of affairs. John is a Christian, a philosopher, and an idealist and poet. He is an emperor too. That is, he has a kingdom in view for the establishment and strengthening of which he writes, as much as Trajan had in his

letters to Pliny. That it will be well to keep in mind. The Revelation would have been unwritten had not John had in mind to strengthen Christians under their trials, tempted, tortured and to die.

Beginning with the twelfth chapter, you have no difficulty in identifying the woman "clothed with the sun" as the wide religion of God, and her child as Christianity. The dragon that seeks to destroy the woman and her child is wrong and sin. The dragon has two servants—one "a beast with seven heads and ten horns," easily enough identified as the secular power of the Roman Empire, and another beast, "with two horns like a lamb, but speaking like a dragon," easily enough identified as the pagan religion. The latter beast is subservient to the first. The first beast opens his mouth in blasphemy and makes war upon the saints, and the second beast "exercised the power of the first beast and caused the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast and caused that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." Now turn to the letter of Pliny and you see all that in action. "The method I have observed toward those who

have been brought before me as Christians is this: I interrogated them whether they were Christians; if they confessed, I repeated the question twice again, adding threats at the same time, when, if they still persevered, I ordered them to be immediately punished. Roman citizens possessed of the same infatuation I directed to be carried to Rome. Some denied they were Christians. They repeated after me an invocation to the gods and offered religious rites before your statue, which for the purpose I had ordered to be brought, together with those of the gods. They reviled the name of Christ; whereas there is no forcing, it is said, those who are really Christians into compliance with any of these articles. Some, who are accused, at first confessed themselves Christians but immediately denied it; while the rest owned indeed that they had been formerly but now some above three, a few above twenty years ago had forsaken that error. They all worshiped your statue and the images of the gods, throwing out imprecations at the same time against the name of Christ."

Now if there are not lights and shadows enough playing over the scenes set forth in Pliny's letter to make us see how the Revela-

tion came into existence and what use it was meant to subserve, idealism in us is at low level. Time and space fail to follow out the parallelism between the two documents we have before us. It would take a book to show their inter-interpretation. But just imagine a crowd of accused Christians before Pliny. Some are Christians and some are not; some cannot be made to recant, and some have recanted and cursed Christ for twenty years. Some are trembling with fear—they do not want to apostatize from Christ, but can they endure torture? They are tempestured by every emotion and passion known to the human soul. Now Pliny brings before them the statue of the Emperor. "Will you worship this statue? Will you reverence this image of Roman power and religion and revile Christ?" There is Pliny and the forces he represents, and the crowd of the accused standing before him. They must inevitably yield unless other influences can be brought to bear on them. Other influences are brought to bear on them. Let us see what they are. We may regard John as standing beside them telling them what he has seen. It is hard to stand trial before this court on earth. But there is a court on high before

which not only these alleged criminals but this very court itself must stand in judgment. Pliny asks, "Will you worship this statue of the Emperor?"

"I saw an angel flying in mid heaven, having everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, saying: Fear God, and give glory to him, and worship him that made heaven and earth and the sea and fountains of waters.

"If any man worship the beast and his image and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night who worship the beast and his image and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Now remember that it is right in this connection that you read: "I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from

henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." What power can torture and death have over souls to whom such visions and such voices are reality? The images of the Emperor and of the gods are vainly placed before men who catch and trust the conceptions of John. Suppose they are tortured and executed, what of it? You have from Pliny's letter two female slaves under the Roman government—but deaconesses in the church—put to torture before your eyes. What will be the result? Will they recant and revile Jesus? They see something else beside the immediate scene before them. They have this vision in their minds:

"I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship[^] before thee."

Here is Pliny with his instruments of torture, and here are these two female slaves with this vision as a possession and a conviction. Again we ask: What will be the result? What was the result? Who went to the wall? Pliny with his forces, or the two female slaves with the forces dominant in their souls? Who worships the image of the Emperor that Pliny set before his accused? So dominant has their religion become that we may say, who does not worship the God feared and loved by the two female slaves? The description of the overthrow of Babylon in Chapter xviii. is not overdrawn as representing the utter wreck of both the secular and the religious powers of which Pliny was agent.

This second half of the book of Revelation is stamped throughout with the impress of purpose to meet just such exigencies as are revealed to us in this correspondence of the proconsul of Bithynia and the Roman Emperor.

There is hardly a verse in which adaptation to the then present troubles is not discernible. There were men brought up before Pliny who, he says, confessed and denied in the same breath. We know of the moral weakness out of which

such action sprang. We can sympathize with it. Yet perdition is in the train of such moral forcelessness. Many when they denied doubtless lied. Many said they had been Christians but gave up that religion long ago. Many doubtless that said this were conscious that it was untrue. Now go to the very last chapter but one, where you have the new heaven and the new earth before you—when the former things are passed away and you think you are dealing with the last things in the infinitely extended future, and every representation is stamped with reference to this trembling, stammering, fearing crowd before Pliny. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son. But the timid and the faithless and all liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." It will not do to confess and deny before Pliny, and if you save yourself by lying before that tribunal, it will only be to fall under the everlasting condemnation of one more dread. The Book from beginning to end had a purpose, and that purpose was to meet an issue then pressing. What kind of an issue there was joined, this classic correspondence between Pliny and Trajan discloses.

In the action of this section it is easy enough to follow the lines of retribution as the angels one after another empty their bowls. At the close of their action you have an entire rearrangement of the scenes. True to the genius of enforcing by repetition, the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters give a new setting for all that has gone before in reference to the Roman Empire—only here the vision seems to rest rather on the city of Rome than on the broad expanse of the whole Roman state. These two chapters may be considered as an expansion of what is given briefly in the 19th verse of Chapter xvi. "The great harlot that sitteth upon many waters" can be nothing else than the city of Rome. This harlot is viewed as the impersonation of the inspiration of sin.

Here it may be said that the attempted identification by ultra Protestantism of this "woman arrayed in purple and scarlet" with the Roman Catholic church is a fetch worthless and unworthy. John was looking upon the then existing sin of pagan Rome. What that condition was you can learn from Roman authors themselves. Juvenal was a contemporary of John. Juvenal was hard, cold, intellectual,

satirical, biting, bitter, but doubtless substantially truthful. The satires of Juvenal may be read as a commentary on John.

“Nothing is left, nothing, for future times
To add to the full catalogue of crimes;
The baffled sons must feel the same desires,
And act the same mad follies, as their sires.
Vice has attained its zenith.”

To a spiritual optimist like John that could not be the end of things. Vice, however triumphant then, must go to the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; its overthrow is sure and awful.

Here is a good opportunity to glance at the second of the interpretative principles by which we have been guided.

There is no book in the Scriptures which has less of prophecy, considered as fortune telling respecting nations or the church, than this. There is absolutely nothing in it concerning Alaric, Attila, Mahomet, Charlemagne, Napoleon, pope, or popes, the Catholic Church or Protestantism, or the persons and events, thousand and one, that have been picked out as designated by it. There is a symbolism cast over the future covering this truth and nothing more:

“Truth crushed to earth shall rise again;
The eternal years of God are hers.
But error wounded writhes with pain
And dies amid her worshipers.”

Or this:

“Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting,
With exactness grinds he all.”

We have thrown into the future, in our mistaken attempts at interpretation, even on moral lines, what was uttered by John with reference to the then present or what is applicable to the always present. Take the first resurrection and the millennium. We put that in the distant future as a historic event. Now the Revelation gives no warrant for any such interpretation, except as you regard the resurrection as an ever present and so as a possibly existing future fact. Go back to the crowd of the accused standing before Pliny with the alternative of worship of the Emperor's statue or death. Now what will happen suppose the latter is chosen? what will be a reason why the latter is chosen?

“I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God and which had not worshipped the beast, neither

his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. This is the first resurrection." If we want to know what the first resurrection is, instead of looking ahead to the end of the ages, we must look back and see what John says will happen to one who is beheaded for the witness of Jesus. He goes to live and reign with Christ an indefinite period. The Greek text reads, "thousand years," without limiting article. That is the first resurrection. The value of that teaching for us is, that, if we are true to Christ in our day, at our death we go up to live and reign with Christ, and on us the second death or moral destruction shall have no power. The rest of the dead appear not on the canvas before John. They are not astir. They are not with this glorious army of martyrs. The vision discloses them not. Concerning their fortunes till the final judgment assize, when "the dead, small and great, stand before God and the books are opened," the vision is silent. To the question, what were their experiences in that intervening time?—

"There lives no record of reply."

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“The rest remaineth unrevealed;
He told it not. Something sealed
The lips of that evangelist.”

The vision is meant for the comfort of the saints in their trials, is meant to give strength to the timid as they debate the question whether they shall worship the statue of the Emperor or worship God. When you stand looking at the Battle of Gettysburg, on its vast canvas you do not see what is going on at Vicksburg. So the Revelation pictures sometimes confine the view to one set of occurrences, leaving others unlimned, however important they may be. Drama after drama passes in its action before you, with hints here and there that other dramas are contemporaneously enacting, though upon them the curtain is never rung up. This is the case with the millennium. It is a past and ever present fact. Past historically in the case of all who have died in the faith; present as we pass over to the general assembly and church of the first born whose names are written in heaven. This is the first resurrection—a present spiritual institution and the inheritance of the saints in light. Forms of trial change in the ages. But the results of contests with temptation are the same.

There is still a second death and a first resurrection as the possible outcome of all our conflicts with sin. Still is the inheritance of all things the portion of him that overcometh.

The crowning vice of the interpretation of the Revelation has been the attempt to treat the visions as indicating a consecutive order in time. There is no reason why the final judgment may not be regarded as contemporaneous with the processes of the first resurrection and of the second death. John is as silent respecting any second resurrection for the good as he is respecting a first resurrection for the wicked.

The judgment scene in the latter part of Chapter xx. may be the totality of a process a part of which has been seen in another way before.

Time fails to comment on the literary merits of this section of the Book. Suffice it to say that it secures increasing interest in the progress of the action to the close. Passion and power nowhere rise to heights more sublime or are nowhere longer sustained than in Chapter xviii., in the action grouped around the fall of Babylon the great. That chapter is a masterpiece of imagination. Its equal in graphic ela-

boration and in the expression of intensity of feeling is not easily found in literature. In these respects there is certainly no superior. Perhaps you may call that chapter the grand climacteric of the passion of the Revelation.

When were these descriptions fulfilled? In their scenic literalness never. But in the spiritual realm they are always fulfilling. Rome never was overthrown in manner and form as set forth by John. But take the wickedness of that day—how utter its destruction! dead, burnt out, burnt up, gone—gone to the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone—no resurrection awaits it. The passions of a Cæsar, of the corrupt populace, extinct as Archean volcanoes!

One would have supposed that when the wickedness enthroned and entrenched in the Roman Empire was overthrown and sent to its doom, John would have reached the terminus of his excursion among spiritual things. But no, John sees an end beyond that end. The beast and false prophet may have received sentence forever, but Satan is bound only for an indefinite period. Sin is inveterate. The forms then existing would lose their force and die. But in other days it will in other ways gather head and

still make war upon the saints. But it is a losing battle that it fights. Ultimately all, the deceived and the deceiver, go where the Roman beast and the false prophet have gone, and their adjuncts Death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire with them. So perishes sin.

The rest of the book is a detail of the fortunes of triumphant righteousness. The description of the New Jerusalem is of quieter feeling, as is fit, but the eye of man has scarcely seen a beauty or a magnificence in nature which is not put under contribution to the picture. One would say that what is begun with such high colors could not be congruously completed, yet it is. The city stands in its perfect beauty. The river of the water of life glides through it. The tree of life bears its fruit for it, and "the Lord God is the light of it." The power of that painting over human souls has been felt in the ages past; it will abide on them through time. That scenic beauty will never weather-wear. It is fadeless as eternity.

From beginning to end the Revelation is sustained by the spirit of optimism. No sin can prevail. The ongoing of the universe is against it and will crush it out. No righteousness, how-

ever gentle, can be lost. Behind it is the love and might of God. Tennyson has his way of coming at it, and John has his, but both have the same ultimate philosophy—all things rest in GOD PANTOKRATOR, and move toward ends designed by his wisdom and love, in processes directed by his will.

“That God which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off Divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.”

III.

J O B.

IN this outline exposition of the book of Job all questions are dismissed save form and intent of composition.

In form Job is drama and presents all the difficulties and perplexities of that species of composition.

The final expositor of Hamlet has not laid down his pen. There is much yet to be said about the meaning that Shakespeare had in writing his lines, and there is no end to the possibilities of their suggestion.

Is not that the mark of a great composition—that it is the perennial fountain of exposition and comment? That it sets and holds men to thought upon it is an indication not of obscurity but of luminousness. It shines out like the sun, many-rayed, in all directions. We approach it now along some lines, now along others. Its genius is that it holds you, come to it howsoever you will.

Job is one of the great writings that provoke thought. System after system can be found in it or raised from it. It is a great composition that can challenge and charm thought for two thousand five hundred years and still find men as eager to search for its truths and suggestions as ever.

The latest products of printing are treatises explanatory of Job; and they find attent readers.

This review can only touch upon points. Yet a bird flying over a continent ought to know that there is something there—here and there a noble stream, here and there a mighty forest under whose “tall oaks and gnarled pines” the cool shade is scented by the trailing arbutus and the violet.

What is the plot of a drama? What is its theme, what is it meant to set forth? You might think that ought always to be clear, but it very frequently is not, and certainly is not in Job.

The prologue opens with one set of questions in dispute, and the main body of the development seems to be occupied with another. There seems to be a mismatch between the point argued by

Satan against Jehovah and that at issue between Job and his three friends. But that is the art of drama—to throw you off the track for a long time and then to approach the point of interest in an unexpected way. I think we shall get a clue that will guide us with some satisfaction through the book if we regard the main issue as lying in the dispute set forth in the prologue, the discussion between Job and his friends, Elihu included, as incidental.

The fundamental question of this drama is not the philosophy of human suffering, but, what do men serve God for? Is there any such thing as righteousness *per se*, or is it all for a price? To try out that question is the end for which all the rest of the action of the drama is brought on to the stage. Jehovah said there were men that were good for goodness' sake. Satan said there were no such men, that if men are good they are so, only for some ulterior end of pleasure or advantage, that if they are not as bad as they can be, they are as bad as they dare. Jehovah says there is a man, Job, who means to be good through thick and thin; he loves righteousness for its own sake and hates iniquity in itself. Satan says, with a guffaw, "Doth Job

fear God for naught? He is having an easy time, you have hedged him in so that everything is fortunate for him, but let luck run against him and you will see what his virtue amounts to." Satan, "the accuser of his brethren," is a cynic. We understand from the Revelation that heaven is swept clean of such characters now. But he and his, alas! were "cast down" to the earth. His angels here are sturdy, numerous—

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the
 brooks
In Vallambrosa"—

people who assert that there is nothing good in man, woman or politics; that everybody is corrupt, and for sale; that the good only are those

"Whose life is like a weel-gaun mill,
Supplied wi' store o' water;
The heappet happier's ebbing still,
And still the clap plays clatter."

Philosophically you would say that Satan was a utilitarian, an egoistic hedonist, that he had drunk long and deep from the wells of Hobbes and Bentham; that what he means is that first, last and all the time there are no deeper springs in man's nature than pleasure or self-interest; that he is incapable of an action whose ulterior

motive is not one of personal advantage. Hobbes said the word "ought" ought to be expunged from the language and Satan said it had been. That is the ground on which Satan plants himself in his controversy with Jehovah. It is to try out this question whether there are any springs of reverence, of attachment to righteousness in man's nature to which he will prove true under all circumstances, that the machinery of the drama is set in motion. Satan is balked in his first experiment with Job over this question, and, on complaint that the trial is not severe enough, gets a *carte blanche* to proceed to the last extremity but that of life.

Thus stands the matter in the court of heaven. Now the scene is transferred to the plane of earth. It looks like *contretemps*, cross purposes, for Job and his friends to fall so long and so ardently to the discussion of the question of the philosophy of human suffering. That is not the question to which our attention has been called in the scene laid in the Divine abode. But consider; how could the drama be otherwise developed? We have had a corner of the curtain pulled aside that we might look upon action above that was entirely concealed from those

below. They did not know what we do; so far as they are concerned the action begins with them in the unheralded disasters that overtake Job. On the face of the case they have nothing to do with anything but the philosophy of those disasters. They know nothing about the scene in the upper realm—nothing about the points and purposes at issue there. They take up their problem from their point of knowledge and proceed to deal with it as best they can. The question plainly enough before them is, why this disaster, why this suffering, what is its meaning, intent and purpose?

It is not necessary here to particularize in respect to the course of the argument over that question. Long as that argument is, clear through to the end of Elihu's speech it is very simple. The philosophy is such and such only as could come out of the thought of the time. Job's friends had a truth—an important truth, to wit, that sin and suffering are conjoined. That is a good induction in any age. But it is good only for a certain class of facts and cannot be laid down over all. Job's friends seem to have multiplied and replenished the earth with their like. There is many a theologian and

many a scientist who is simply a case of reversion, atavism, to the type of Job's friends,—who has found a principle, raised from observation of a few facts, and who forthwith strains himself to make it cover all the facts of the universe, will they, nill they. Sometimes, however, “a bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and a covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.” But that made little difference to Job's friends and makes little to their philosophical successors. If the facts do not fit the theory, so much the worse for the facts; cast them out, ignore them, embrain them, transmute them into something else. *Fiat THEORY, ruat cælum.*

The whole section occupied by the discussion of Job and the three friends is relieved from tediousness only by the beauty of its illustrative description. Philosophically no advance is made in it. The friends begin by insinuation and end by charge of wickedness on the part of Job as the key to his misery. Job iterates and reiterates denial of their theory as just explanation of his trouble. There is no advance in the philosophy of suffering over this ground—that suffering is and ought to be an adjunct of sin, and over the

illegitimate conclusion that where there is suffering there is sin, till you get to Elihu.

Whatever the critics may say about the drop in the literary character of the part of Elihu—whatever they may say about interpolation by a later hand than an original writer—the part borne by Elihu is a necessity in the moral development of the doctrine under discussion. If Elihu's speeches are an interpolation, then somebody worked over the original drama who had better moral insight than the first author. The position that suffering may not be sign of sin but a means of moral discipline, is a distinct and immeasurable advance on the argument of the three friends.*

“Sweet are the uses of adversity,” and “by the sorrow of the countenance the heart is made better,”—there is a principle as inherently important, and to observation as widely employed, as the following of sin by suffering. To at-

* The author of Job was under no obligation to write to suit his modern critics. If he were, he might well have passed all effort to begin with. Suppose the Elihu section is not up in literary strength and finish to the rest of the treatise, what of it? Passion and power in the Reply to Hayne are not equal in all its parts. It is said that Homer nodded. Perhaps Job did. It is hard to keep protracted and involved composition throughout up to the point of its highest tension. A moral height is gained by Elihu that looks far out over and beyond the foot-hills of the previous argument, whatever their beauties may be.

tribute the part of Elihu to a subsequent emendator is simply to assert that the original author did not know about a principle of explanation of suffering that was the burden of many a writer and observer before his day, speaker of proverbs, writer of psalms or prophet. Indeed, to this day you cannot do much better with the philosophy of suffering than Elihu did with it. We read to-day as about the best thing we can do to steady mind in affliction: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby."

It may seem strange that Elihu, on this point of the uses of adversity as discipline, did not lay stress on immortality as laying ground for reconciliation of the difficulties of the problem. Not that the idea of immortality is a solvent of all trouble in the case, but it does present a perspective on whose magnificent stretch the trials of time dwindle into insignificance. It is in view of the opening up of that great realm that Paul puts all the argument he wishes to make, over the question that is debated so long and strenuously in Job, in this succinct form:

“For our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory:

“While we look not on the things which are seen but upon the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

It is safe to say that had the conviction of immortality been as firm with the participants in the debate in Job as with Paul we should never have had this argument over the philosophy of suffering, at least in this form. One thought would have obviated the necessity of going over all the ground traversed in that book on this philosophy. Man is a great being, with an unbounded future. The gymnastics of time—moral as well as other—develop him and make him fitter to enter with mastery upon his eternal heritage. Huddle existence up together in the years of time, and our suffering fills a large space in it. But let existence be æonic, let it run limitless, and the affliction becomes light, a mote in the sunbeam, and we know that it will disappear a speck in the distance, while we are onward bound to “vaster issues.”

But this light did not shine on the problems

in Job. Existence with the Hebrew as well as the Greek was geocentric—better, perhaps, to the superficies of the earth. To be sure, the Hebrew had his sheol, as well as the Greek his hades, but it was dark and forbidding ground, unilluminated by any bright flush of day.

How that matter stood with Job, hear himself say: “Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.”

That men ever believed in the continuity of existence is evident enough over and over again in the book of Job. But the continuation beyond this life was not in desirable conditions. There was no sunshine in that land. Souls went not up and away, but down and below. You need not hunt far in Job to find such idea of immortality. You strike it in the very first reply of Eliphaz the Temanite to Job’s first lament.

The famous text, “I know that my Redeemer liveth,” we shall not be able to make much out of. In the first place, it is not a Redeemer from

sin that Job wants. Just what he is asserting is that he has committed no sin or no such sin as alleged by his friends. He is stung to the quick by their indictment and in his exasperation cries out for an Avenger to take his part against such a charge, and in irate hyperbole says that if his flesh should go with his corrupting skin somebody will yet stand up for his vindication on the earth, and he shall see him.

Job's faith in a vindicator may, however, paraphrase our faith in a Redeemer and in an immortality thick sown with blessed privilege and bright with delight. But then, our faith is ours and not Job's.

Life never leaves us where we started. A drama representative of life will not leave the parties in interest where they started. There will be progress about it. The saint will persevere to his destination and the sinner to his. But in life, and in drama which is its parable, there are critical periods of trial where the principles of life will be put to the test—danger periods wherein the good may seem to be confused, to falter, and to be near to overthrow. A Psalmist looking back over some such period in his career cried out: "But as for me, my feet

were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped."

Remember that this drama was writ not to prove that Job was a good man, but to show what a good man will do under trial. How will he be modified by his circumstances? What will he do with the new conditions into which he is brought by the change and progress of events? Will he safely pass through the testing crises, and what are they? Somewhere in his floundering, in his attempt to find firm footing before the charges of his adversary friends, as they brought before him the fact that sin finds trial and thence inferred that trial is an index of sin, Job stumbles on the fact that sin does not always have a hard lot, not always is it true that "the way of transgressors is hard." It was just exactly this fact that the Psalmist whom we last quoted was contemplating:

"I was envious at the foolish when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. Their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men."

The critical period of Job's trial is in his thought and possible action over that fact. It is but one step from the perception of such fact to

saying, "It does not pay to serve God." Had Job really come to that conclusion Satan would have won his case and could have replied to Jehovah: "There, you see Job doth not serve God for naught—as soon as his pay for serving you is taken away from him he is ready to curse thee to thy face—ready to become a pessimist." Now, that Job's moral fortunes hung trembling on this pivot is beyond question. Elihu discerned it, and one of Elihu's merits is that he called Job's attention sharply to his danger. He tells him that he is "in company with workers of iniquity and walketh with wicked men," because he said, "It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God."

It was only necessary to go on practically from that position, theoretically assumed, and Satan had his game.

But not all speculative trouble takes root in character. Much of it only lingers in the realm of temptation and never ripens into fruit. Job was evidently rudely jostled from his moral equilibrium by the thought of the prosperity of the wicked, but he did not deny God; he still held fast to him whether he was paid or not for his service, held fast still in spite of the blind-

ing confusion of his own wretchedness to the onward flow of existence! Sometimes we wish we could stand still in order that we might make adjustment in our trouble. But we cannot stop. Forward march, is the order, and if we do not step we are crowded along. There is mercy in the order. If we stood still we should fall. We would like to sit in quietness and enjoy "the luxury of woe." But the rude slamming of a door reminds us that we must arise and put the house in order to stand against the gusts of a summer storm, and, heaven be praised! we can never get back to our reverie of sadness again.

God does not always temper the wind to the shorn lamb. Sometimes he blows him over a ledge where the force of the wind is broken. Usually something is done. In our temptations other suggestions are pushed along, and in attending to them the temptation slides into the past, never to renew its power,—perhaps never to return, or if to return, to find a new and stronger adversary to it in possession of the soul.

Job was not an irrational man. The speech of Elihu must have influenced him. It had potency to check him so that he must have said with himself: "No, no, I can't quite say that I

will not serve God unless he give me the reward of prosperity for it—not quite that.”

But Elihu’s words have no sooner died away than something else occurs to give him thought. All things are not at a stand-still even over the sands of Arabia. “The voice of the Lord” is heard in thunder. The clouds mount up in blackness on the horizon.

“His chariots of wrath the deep thunder clouds
form,
And dark is his path on the wings of the
storm.”

A tornado comes up apace! What can man do against its might? Yet it is under the control of God.

“Without his high behest
It shall not in the mountain pine
Disturb the sparrow’s nest.”

May it not be that man’s wisdom falls as far short of God’s wisdom as man’s power does of his power? Who shall contend with the Almighty about anything? who measure himself against him in any matter? What is my “iniquity” to the perfection—the beauty of the holiness of God?

“Behold I am vile.
O Infinite Glory of righteousness!
I have uttered what I understood not.”

“I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.” *There* is a new attitude! No request for a vindicator of the integrity of past days—only the inspiration of longing for a righteousness that might be.

Now perhaps we might go back to the beginning and run up the curtain on that upper stage and ask the cynic, Satan, how it is with this man Job, who, he said, would not serve God unless for pay. Tell us how your test has come out. Have things come to pass as you said they would? Is this man in the humiliation of dust and ashes over the feeling of his moral poverty in the sight of God the sort of man you predicted he would be if you could visit him with tribulation? Does it not look as though there were a root in his nature that you had not calculated upon; that the man loves righteousness for itself and not for pay? Yet stay a moment longer. The three friends have had time to reflect as well as Job, and things have changed somewhat with them. They say to Job: “In the heat of our argument we charged you with sin wrongfully; whether you are a sinner or not, we

are, for we have put the worst construction possible on your case; pray for us that impending woe may not strike us."

Now, Satan, look at this man, still in his misery, not a cloud of misfortune drifting from him, forgetting himself in his anxiety for his friends, "lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting," and say if man's relations with man are always selfish, if even in his own dire extremity man may not sometimes think of others rather than himself; if the game of life is always—every man for himself; if there may not be genuine unselfish service of man as well as of God.

And now, Satan, we will ring down the curtain on you. Your experiment has failed over both the great realms of religion—the relationship which man has to God and that which he has to man.

Job began a man of integrity and he has come out with a hunger and a thirst for a greater integrity, which will only grow into greater mastery of his being as "the years of eternity roll."

He began with kindness to man and he has come out of his tribulation with undistinguishing, unselfish, forgiving love.

The book of Job reaches intellectually the conclusion that in suffering as well as in everything else there will be elements beyond the power of human resolution. But it reaches also a higher spiritual plane in the conclusion that men can look over any unknown in unselfishness and loving trust. It comes fairly into the flush of the dawn of a spiritual day where—"Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done" is sunlight.

That rare saint, Cowper, breathed the atmosphere of that high spiritual day:

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter
And he will make it plain."

IV.

JONAH.

I INTEND herein to treat of the literary form of the book of Jonah, and to comment on its ethics.

In what department as literature does it fall? I think it is plainly comedy. It is meant to be satire, light and kindly, on the Hebrew prophets. The idea of satirizing the prophets may strike us unfavorably. It may give a rude jostle to the feeling of reverence which we have for the most prominent characters in the Old Testament.

But we must give our idea of the Hebrew prophets a much wider range than is common. We have derived our notion of the prophets from the specimens we have in the Bible. But we must remember that they have secured our veneration because they are instances of the survival of the fittest out of a very numerous class. The prophet was not so rare a personage in Israel as we are accustomed to think. The function of a Hebrew prophet was in large degree, if not

mainly, political. The prophets whose works have survived to us were Israel's statesmen. The fires that burned within them were primarily patriotic. They were not the clergymen of Israel. The priest more nearly represented the minister among us.

The Catholic church and its congeners, the old churches of the East, call their ministers priests. That shows how the analogies lie as between the religious officials of the Hebrew people and the larger divisions of the Christian church. The continuous line in religion, from Israel through to us, is largely by way of the priest. The prophets that have survived to us have come to their prominence in religion because in dealing with their problems of state they tried to find and lay foundations in everlasting right. There was a right way for the nation and there was a right way for the people of a nation. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach unto any people," may well summarize the common spirit in the genius of the Biblical prophets. It is out from that common factor, as they wrought at their various problems of state, that their religious inspiration comes to us.

But think of the prophets as primarily engaged

with questions of state and there are some results which we can work out ourselves as inherently likely to ensue. There will be prophets and prophets—prophets of all sorts—prophets false as well as prophets true—prophets of all kinds of burdens, i. e., all sorts of policies for all political exigencies—prophets of wisdom and prophets of folly—prophets of righteousness and prophets of lies.

Statesmen survive, and so we have the prophets of Scripture. But where there is one statesman there are ten politicians, and demagogues innumerable. You have only to read the Old Testament to find that Israel was distracted by the multitude of his advisers, as we are. There were eras when everybody seemed to have a bee in his bonnet and when all were shouting together their political nostrums. Parties were formed, as with us, over questions of political economy or of national or international state-craft.

The three tailors of Grub Street who issued their manifesto—"We the people of England"—could have found apt precedent, doubtless, in the stirring times of Isaiah and Ezekiel. In Jeremiah you can read:

"For every one from the least even to the greatest is given to covetousness; from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. We looked for peace but no good came, and for a time of health and behold trouble. The snorting of horses was heard from Dan, the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones."

That does not read so very different from experiences within our own memory. Some said there would be no war; that the whole matter would be over in sixty days.

Some said let the erring sisters depart in peace, and some said they were even justifiable in attempting to break up the nation. So they each prophesied in his several way. But there were prophets of other vision.

"We wait beneath the furnace-blast
The pangs of transformation;
Not painlessly doth God recast
And mould anew the nation.

Hot burns the fire,
Where wrongs expire,
Nor spares the hand
That from the land
Uproots the ancient evil."

We had our prophets and we had to choose among them as did ancient Israel. I do not know that the principles of choice were essentially different in the two cases.

Back in Deuteronomy you find that Israel had his constitution in the recognition of Jehovah as the governing God of his nation, and that the setting up the worship of any other divinity was treason to the state, because it laid the foundation for breaking it up. An act of that sort was just like firing on the flag at Fort Sumter. Down in Isaiah you find exactly the doctrine of Washington's farewell address—"to avoid entangling alliances" with other nations. And throughout all the prophets of the Bible you find insistence on the fact which is borne in upon us, that a moral nation is mighty. The prophets of Israel were, then, dealing with problems not essentially different from our own and under conditions like our own. It was perhaps as hard to tell in that day who was a prophet as it is in ours to tell who is a statesman. It is pretty clear now that Washington was a patriot and a statesman. But in his day there was more than one cabal against him that had the ear of the people. The average prophet of Israel was a politician, the

great prophet was a statesman, and the little one was a demagogue. It was as hard, probably, for the people to tell what ought to be done in their national crises as it is now for us to tell what we ought to do with shouting on this hand and on that for free trade and for protection, for high license, low license or no license, for a gold basis and for a silver basis and for no basis at all, for government control and for anything but government control. You have only to read the prophets that have survived to us to be sure that Israel had, as well as we, a din of conflicting interests, policies and nostrums.

Now give such a state of affairs and a satirist will arise. Some cool head will look over the situation, will see clearly the wrong to be resisted, the right to be assisted and the blown bubbles to be punctured. It has always been so. Truth and right have taken as much from satire as from any other intellectual or moral agency. No squadron in the field did so much to overthrow slavery as the Bigelow and the Petroleum V. Nasby papers. They turned the laugh against it, and when an institution gets to be ridiculous its days are numbered.

Nobody knew how to wield the weapon of

satire better than the Hebrew prophets. Juvenal himself pales in causticity before Elijah as seen in his contest with the prophets of Baal. Isaiah the great and the grand—Websterian in his sustained power—relieves the “inevitable” onward march of his thought with shafts of ridicule. But there are satirists and satirists. According to theme or condition of the times or trait of nature, you will find this satirist strenuous, that playful. Juvenal bites—he is exactly sarcastic, he goes for the flesh of his victim, he strikes to draw blood. Washington Irving is always sportive, genial—the laugh is as far as he wants to go.

I think the book of Jonah falls into the class satire of the latter sort. Whoever wrote Jonah meant satire on the prophets as Lowell meant satire on the politicians of the day of the Bigelow papers, only the strokes in Jonah are of lighter touch than even those of Lowell. If any one wants to understand Jonah I would advise him to read the masterpieces of wit till his sense of humor has become supple—read, say, “The Vicar of Wakefield,” “Knickerbocker’s History of New York” and “The Pickwick Papers,” for they are specimens of the kindly humorous satire I conceive to be illustrated in the book of

Jonah. Whatever be the facts of the history of a man called Jonah, they are treated by the book before us very much as Goldsmith treats Dr. Primrose. You love Dr. Primrose, but he has a genius for blundering. You reverence him for his good will and devoutness, but a smile of sympathy goes over to the side of the "neer-do-weel" prisoners who make up faces at him and play pranks at his expense while he delivers to them long homilies on virtue. But everything goes well in the Vicar of Wakefield, as you know. The good all grow better and the bad repent. The same humorous, kindly spirit seems to dominate over every person and every condition in the book of Jonah. Nobody is hurt in it from beginning to end—save one poor little squash vine. Everybody save Jonah is always on his best temper.

Take the sailors. According to their notions they were in danger of shipwreck because they had a man delinquent to his duty to his God on board their ship. Jonah confessed that he was the cause of their trouble.

He was, to them, a foreigner. They would hardly be thought under obligations to have much respect or care for him. But the spirit

that afterward wrought in the good Samaritan lived in their rough bosoms. They were nobly human. They were not responsible for the suggestion to throw him overboard. That was Jonah's own direction. The quaint record runs: "Then they said unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you; for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to land, but they could not, for the sea wrought and was tempestuous against them. Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life and lay not upon us innocent blood; for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee."

That is not to be beaten in literature for expression of gentility under difficult circumstances.

The fish himself is well behaved. After having given Jonah the hospitalities of the deep for a reasonable length of time, he puts him safe on shore. There is nothing mean about the fish.

As to the inhabitants of Nineveh—did a re-

former ever find people so tractable under his hand?

Surely the prophets who prophesied in Israel for righteousness would have been glad to find something of the "sweet reasonableness" that characterized the Ninevites in the stiff necked, hard hearted and dull minded crowd with which they had to deal. Every one, from king to beggar, fell to in reformation at his best will. They "turned every one from his evil way and from the violence that was in his hands." The world never saw such a renovation in so short a time. The men suffered no grass to grow under their heels till they became good. The women did not stop in their moral house cleaning to look in the glass or to look at what they had done till they had got everything snug and nice.

So Nineveh easily passed moral muster. A tolerable sort of sinner—those Ninevites. Pity that the stock is extinct; that the only record we have showing the existence of such beings as are willing to repent on notice given exhibits them in the fossil state. Somehow the law of the survival of the fittest ought not to have run against them.

The character of Jonah is so peculiar that you can hardly suppose it to be drawn except in satire. He is as big a blunderer as Handy Andy. But there is an element of awryness always about his blundering. While everybody else in the story mentioned is good-natured, he loses his temper, gets moody, sour and sulky.

Told to go to Nineveh, he pulls down to Joppa. When the message again comes to go to Nineveh it evidently discomposes him, and he goes and delivers it in the curtest style possible. All he says is, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." It is afterward disclosed that before he went he knew of a contingency, which happening, Nineveh might not be overthrown. He kept this contingency to himself, said nothing about it in the proclamation of his message, and then gets angry because that occurred which he suspected might occur. The contingency was nothing less than the possibility that the people of Nineveh might repent and so escape destruction. But the repentance of Nineveh was not what Jonah wanted. He wanted to see it come down, and because it did not the record runs, "It displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was very angry." So angry that he besought God

to take his life from him, saying, "It is better for me to die than to live." When a man is fairly angry about one thing he very quickly gets out of sorts with everything. This fact comes out further along in the little matter of the gourd. When that had withered, "God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death." Did you ever hear a great booby boy (have we not been such ourselves?) when some one spoke kindly to him, in a fit of the sulks blurt out peevishness and stuffiness in reply? Well, that is Jonah's state after the withering of the gourd.

And now mark you that it is in that state that you leave Jonah. The curtain is rung down on him in that condition. The laugh even of contempt is on him. That is a reason why I think he is a figure-head of satire. God sometimes uses a poor stick for a messenger; sometimes, but rarely, a surly, crabbed churl. As I am discussing only the probabilities of the literary mode of the book, I have nothing to do further with the facts or fates of Jonah. In the main he is not a lovely character or we do not catch him in a lovely mood. The best that can be

said of him is that he did pay his fare to Tarshish. In the stress of the storm he told the truth to the sailors. He did not, however, tell what he knew to be the whole truth in his proclamation to Nineveh.

There is one portraiture more in this book at which we must look, and it is that of God. We are no longer students or even readers of the Old Testament—more's the pity. I know not how it is that we have dispensed so easily with the Old Testament, for therein are delineations of the Deity that one does not well see how the human heart can forego. God comes out everywhere in the book of Jonah, tender, gentle, with the heart of a mother.

You might suppose that the wrath of God would relentlessly pursue one who ran away from his plain duty.

But after giving Jonah strange experiences and time to think the matter over, God simply suggests the old duty again: "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." (Septuagint aorist, "which I before bade thee.") But no word, no hint of reproach for the deflection from the former command.

The next stroke of the brush on the picture is one put on by the Ninevites.

Paul in his speech at Athens uses the expression: "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him." Paul might well have caught up his expression from the description of the mental process of the king of the Ninevites: "Let them turn every one from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" For this thought remember, too, that they were indebted to no suggestion of Jonah. Respecting that condition of affairs the author of the book writes thus: "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil ways; and God repented of the evil he said he would do unto them, and he did it not."

The next touch upon the picture is laid on by Jonah: "O Lord, was not this my saying when I was yet in my country?"

That is to say, I knew beforehand that you would pardon the penitent. "Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish; for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the

evil." To that accusation the Lord simply replied like a mother to a pouting child: "Doest thou well to be angry?" Then followed a little schooling, tenderly executed, as related in the gourd episode, and to Jonah's continued and increased ill-temper a repetition of the gentle question: "Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?" To Jonah's response, pettish to silliness, you find this reply which closes the book: "Then said the Lord: Thou has had pity on the gourd for which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night; and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand (120,000) persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand (babies), and also much cattle?"

Now I want to fasten attention on that portraiture of God on two points. Please remember that it is from the Old Testament that you get the description of God as "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands and forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin;" and then ask yourself if that wealth of tenderness of spirit was not ex-

hibited without break to Jonah; if long-suffering toward one unworthy of graciousness was not just what was shown throughout all his experiences. Could love leave a bad disposition more tenderly than by a question which would set it thinking? Farewell, Jonah, how did you answer that question? Why is it unanswered? Why just there did the old Hebrew author lay down his pen? Yet stay, we will give Jonah one chance for moral standing. If, after his discipline was over, he repented and wrote this book about himself he shall rank among the good that are very great. A man that satirizes his own sin is out of its toils. One who can see his own meanness and without flinching set it forth, is worthy of the highest honor in the kingdom of God. Were you so great, Jonah? Then pass up to imperishable moral grandeur.

The next time, my friend, you are in a city of six hundred thousand to a million of inhabitants, and, "in the silent midnight watches," ask yourself the question whether there is at the heart of things any sympathy with the actual or possible sufferings of its one hundred and twenty thousand infants, it may steady your mind over a tendency to a depressing skepticism to remem-

ber the firm answer given to your query according to the book of Jonah, on the banks of the Tigris, five and twenty centuries ago.

Nay more, you will think of the same answer when the storms of winter beat, and your question runs out to include all sentient beings. Back from Nineveh of old, over the long reach of time, will come the loveliest picture ever limned by man, of One "whose tender mercies are over all his works." Instead of an idle grin when the book of Jonah is mentioned, cannot we substitute emotions that come from the conviction that in that book we have a masterpiece of literature, and a representation of the character of God that by its very forth-setting, in its simplicity and loveliness, will forever charm and capture the human heart?

V.

ISAIAH.

QUESTION of the duplicate or composite authorship of the writings grouped under the title Isaiah, are deferred for treatment later on. I deal here with the book of Isaiah as it stands before us in the Bible, and as it comes to us out of tradition, as a literary unit.

The apostle Peter, for some purpose that he had before him, uses the expression: "The world that then was." That is just the expression we want to employ if we turn our thoughts on the times of Isaiah. "The world that then was!" Think where you would be, and who would be your companions, and what would be going on around you, if you could be transported back into the eighth century before Christ and look on the world that lay before the vision of Isaiah. You would not only be under other skies, but other nations and even other races would be the prominent actors on the historic

stage. You must go up past the history of any and all of the nations of modern Europe, past Roman and Greek history, and you would find yourself in that strange old world where Egyptians and Assyrians and Chaldeans are acting the drama of individual and national life. The Semite and the Hamite are on the stage. The children of Japheth are still largely nomads, hovering on the borders of the great Nilitic and Mesopotamian civilizations.

Away at the east, and perhaps here and there among Semites and Hamites, can be seen a fringe or an outcrop of that primitive Turanian stock concerning whom we may ask, whose children are they? and hear our question die away answerless in the distance.

Some of the historic landmarks of the life of Isaiah are clear. He wrote in "the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah." The death of Hezekiah is placed in the year 698 B. C. But the historic circumstances are such that Isaiah, if then living, must have been a very old man. We shall not be greatly in error if we place his birth about 780 B. C. We may regard the period of his manhood's activity as about synchronous with the

latter half of the eighth century B. C. But this is about as far back as we can go and get solid footing in the history of the nations. Isaiah's birth dates probably about the time of the first Greek Olympiad, 776 B. C. The Greeks have aggregated into some little states, but their historic attitudes and actions are not clear. It is two centuries after Isaiah's time before you strike the days of Solon and Pisistratus. According to legend, Rome was founded in 753 B. C. Isaiah was then in full manhood and had put forth some of his prophetic writings, and might even then have composed some of his historic work; for he seems to have written chronicles of the kings contemporary with himself—possibly his history took a wider range.

But generations are to pass away before you come to Roman history upon which you can place dependence. In Isaiah's time, Egypt and Assyria divided the scepter of the then civilized and historic world. Some minor nations existed here and there, but rather by the sufferance of these great powers than otherwise. Damascus was a city and a kingdom, but it owed any independent life to its isolation, as did also the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. At one time in

the later years of Isaiah, Babylon came forth to dispute the supremacy with Nineveh. Mero-dach Baladan established and for a while maintained the independence of Babylon. But his later career was disastrous. The Assyrian at Nineveh was the stronger, and the ascendancy of Babylon must lie in abeyance.

In Egypt such kings as Necho I. and Psammetichus reigned. Necho II. reigned toward the end of the century in which Isaiah died. He certainly has been excelled by few monarchs in enterprise. He caused the whole division of Africa to be circumnavigated. There is no record of a re-performance of that feat from the time of Necho II. to that of Vasco de Gama, A. D. 1497. Necho's sailors were three years in making the voyage from the head of the Red Sea round to the mouth of the Nile. Herodotus tells the story, but refuses it his credence because the sailors said that when they doubled the extremity of the continent they had the sun on their right or north of them.

It may well be that the massive stone works, whose recent discovery in Mashonaland astonishes us, are the result of the enterprise proceeding from Egypt or Arabia in this era.

There reigned in Nineveh during the lifetime of Isaiah such sovereigns as Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon, and Sennacherib—men of capacity for all affairs from war to literature. They carried on campaigns east and west, and patronized learning at home. Much of the sculpture now exhumed from the site of ancient Nineveh to startle and charm us with the power of its expression and the nicety of its execution, dates from their reigns. We are also finding the libraries they founded, and can read on their brick tablets the history of their exploits and also the philosophy taught in the schools of their times. We read in the Bible about the destruction by pestilence of the army of Sennacherib, or perhaps rather of a detachment of it, as it lay among the hills of Judea for the purpose of besieging Jerusalem. The germ theory of disease granted, this miracle becomes a tame probability, from corrupted water supply.

We take on all the prejudices of the people and prophets of Judah against Sennacherib. There are few of us who have not committed: "The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold.

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The might of the gentile, uns mote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the
Lord."

We now have the privilege of reading the library of Sennacherib, and we find that certainly in some respects he was a gentleman. It is of him we have the record that, finding some army officer had in some way aspersed him, he said he would pay no attention to him; that he was a person of low breeding and mind, and no gentleman would take any notice of what he said. You find back here the truth illustrated: "In all ages every human heart is human"—even that which beats beneath the crown of a king.

Think not enterprise and pluck and daring are the offspring of these later modern times. There was much going on within and among the nations then. Vast armies were raised, equipped and supported for war. Merchant caravans went in and out of Nineveh to and from the frontiers of China and India for trade. Trains of dromedaries and camels and horses and asses were winding through mountain defiles and across deserts in every direction, and vessels were tempting the perils of unknown waters.

The nations were bravely astir. They had their ambitions and their dreams of manifest destiny. Judah was caught by the spirit of the times and whirled along in the way it led. Whereto tends the spirit of the age? a philosopher would have asked, and, what are the portents for my land? would be the inquisition of a patriot.

Given stirring times, and great men will appear in them. Some will lead the forces of the day, and some, more scholarly and thoughtful, will tell whereto the forces lead. Of this latter class was Isaiah, the Seer. If persistence in influence is any criterion by which to judge, count off a dozen of the world's great men and among them you must put Isaiah. But who was he? We cannot give much of an answer to that question, except by putting in evidence his literary work. His father's name is given and that is all you can find of his ancestral genealogy. He seems to have had children, to whom he gave names carrying in them the core of his political philosophy, insights and vaticinations. But of them we hear nothing. They bore the names their father gave them, but they seem to have inherited none of his genius. As to official rank,

he seems to have been no more than a court historian. What became of him? No one knows. There is a dim tradition that it is to him that the author of the Hebrews alludes as he describes the sufferings of the old martyrs—"They were sawn asunder." That would seem to be the best that his contemporaries, after his long life, could think of to do with him. While he lived he was "a voice crying in the wilderness." There is one touch of his writings which shows he must have been a much hated man. He paints the scorn and derision with which his words were received.

You can see the very upturned noses and uplifted brows and side rolling eyes of the crowd as they express contempt for his utterances. Let me paraphrase a little and you can see this, and see also the clear conception and the steady will by which he was supported.

"To whom will he teach knowledge, and to whom will he impart instruction? That fellow is just fit to teach weaning babes—those just taken from the breast. It is a perpetual drizzle of the same thing right over and over, precept upon precept, precept upon precept, command upon command, command upon command, a little here and a little there."

The original of this is said to be a piece of word painting describing the very jabber of the crowd in their contemptuous comment on the speeches of the prophet. But there is pluck in the man, for he catches up their very balderdash and hurls it back upon them. "It may be with stammering lips and a strange tongue that I speak to this people. But there is one who says: This is the way of rest; give rest to the weary. This is the way to safety. But you will not hear. You shall find the very word of Jehovah shall come to you: Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, command upon command, command upon command, a little here and a little there."

Silence has settled now on all the jeering of that crowd. But the voice of "the one crying in the wilderness," with his "stammering lips" and his "strange tongue," fills the earth.

First and foremost, Isaiah was a politician and a statesman. It happened then, as it does now, that the first men were not called to fill the first places. But then, as now, a patriot's light could not be hid. Isaiah had a manifest destiny before his view for his nation. He had a definite policy both for the people at home and for their con-

nections with surrounding nations. His home policy in the humane sense was democratic to the core. A man was a man whatever his fortunes. His home policy may be defined as an effort to make the most and the best of every man. The quiver of those who have fought the battles of personal liberty—of individual liberty, has always been stuck full of arrows from the armory of Isaiah. Whittier, as the poet-prophet of the rights of man, had his prototype in Isaiah. A generation ago, and especially during the war, this had some meaning to us:

“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God; they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

“Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?

“Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labors. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the

fist of wickedness; ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day unto the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and the speaking of vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be

as the noon day; and the Lord shall guide thee continually."

It is much to have supplied freedom with its watchwords and battle-cries in its contests through the ages. Long years ago, when the blood of men quivered and throbbed with passion for human rights, when we had not sunk to the low level of this dead day when there is no conscience on that subject, when the highest moral aspiration men seem to have is to grasp some one by the throat, saying, "Pay me that thou owest, and a little more," I heard William Lloyd Garrison. The point and fire of his utterance came to climax in quotation from Isaiah:

"Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come upon us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place, and your cove-

nant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night; and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report. For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it. For the Lord shall rise up as in Mt. Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act." So spake this old Israelite patriot, with "thoughts that breathed and words that burned."

But Isaiah was something more than a home politician, he was a statesman of international magnitude. His foreign policy was that of Washington. The government was to avoid "entangling alliances" with any of the nations round about. "Woe unto them that go down to Egypt for help, and stay on horses and trust in chariots," is familiar. But it indicates the genius of his whole system. Judah would go down with the going down of any nation with

whom it might be allied. Let the nations round about fight their own battles. If the best were done for every man, and every man made the most and the best of himself, and all were inspired with a patriotism which rested in recognition of Jehovah and in obedience to him, and in loving enthusiasm for his righteousness, the nation might abide in security in its hill fastnesses.

This was Isaiah's international policy. It did not prevail, and the history of Israel became what it was—foreign alliances, failure therein, conquest, captivity, deportation, dispersion.

But Isaiah's vision was not confined to the relations of Judah to other nations. He looked in on those nations themselves and had mastery of their politics. He seems to have understood the forces that were operating in Egypt and Assyria and in the lesser states, and to have clearly discerned whereto they were leading. His "burdens" respecting all the nations (for he allowed the affairs of no one to escape his inspection) are the result of his convictions respecting the set of the tide of destiny within and around them. You feel as you read his prophecies respecting Nineveh and Babylon and Egypt—

here is a man who looks in on the problems of these nations as Edmund Burke looked in on the French Revolution, or Charles Sumner on American slavery. In one of Mr. Webster's greatest speeches, that on the Revolution in Greece, he causes to pass before you a summary of all European politics of that date. But if you will read the collected works of Isaiah you will find the same kind of work done for you respecting the politics of the civilized world in the eighth century before Christ. You will see the things that are about to be in those nations according to the vision of a cosmopolitan statesman. This is to be said for Isaiah too—intense Judaist patriot that he is, his sympathies are not confined to his own nation but embrace all peoples.

Israel has the most precious inheritance, to be sure, but Israel holds it in trust for all mankind.

There is hardly a generous, heroic impulse for the welfare of men but that can find its coin of expression already minted in the words of Isaiah. Isaiah is an optimist, not for Israel only, but for man. "I have been found by those who sought me not. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill be made low, the crooked

shall become straight and the rough places plain, for the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."

If ever there is "the parliament of man, the federation of the world," it will go to Isaiah for a design and motto for its seal. [Design: Beasts wild and tame tethered together; a little child leads them. Legend: They shall not hurt nor destroy. (?)] The last ideal of philosophy—the full, sympathetic, co-operating brotherhood of man—finds its expression.

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy, in all my holy mountain."

I want to call attention to the one solitary cause out of which all this is to spring: "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." That one

conception of the one governing God, realized, that shall mould men to the last blessed result of universal love.

Isaiah knew the necessity of theism as a basis for philanthropy.

I would like to speak of Isaiah as a poet, but the topic is difficult to treat. It is hard to define poetry, hard to detect and understand it in unfamiliar forms clear across race lines. We ought to enlarge our conception of poetry. Poetry may exist in prose as well as under rhyme and meter. Whatever can carry the feelings and satisfy the imagination is of poetic order. Isaiah is to be rated as one of the first of poets, not because he wrote according to the laws of old Hebrew parallelism, but because he carries the imagination and the feelings on the tide of his speech.

You will detect this element of force in all that I have before quoted. And you have only to open Isaiah at random and read, and you will soon see that you are caught and borne onward in poetic onflow.

“Alas! a tumult of many nations!
They rage with the raging of the sea.
Alas! a roaring of kingdoms!
They roar with the roaring of mighty waters.

Like the roaring of mighty waters do the nations
roar.

He rebuketh them and they flee away,
Driven like the chaff of the mountains before
the wind,

Like stubble before the whirlwind.

“Ho, thou land of rustling wings
Beyond the rivers of Ethiopia!
That sendest thy messengers upon the sea,
In reed boats upon the face of the waters.
Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation tall and
fair,
To a people terrible from the first and onward,
To a mighty, victorious people,
Whose land is divided by rivers.”

We can feel and see the course of thought and
action here.

But there is one other test. Music is allied
to poetry. If there is poetry anywhere in lan-
guage, music will detect it and use it. Have you
ever heard the oratorio of the Messiah? Well,
please to remember that oratorio—perhaps there
is no greater musical composition of man—goes
to Isaiah for its language of expression, owes
its existence to the inspiration of that language,
was born to try to express the Isaian idea. The
soul of the great musician met its kin only in
the poetry of the soul of this old Hebrew
prophet.

Yes, hear the oratorio, and as you are rapt by the great chorus, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," realize that music and poetry have never met before and probably never will again on a higher plane; and send back to the old Hebrew prophet-poet a heart pulsation of gratitude for the enobling rapture which is yours to enjoy and henceforth is to delight and sanctify the children of men.

But what shall I say about this "master in Israel" in religion? He goes by the name of the evangelical prophet—the gospel prophet. What good news is there in religion which he did not proclaim? No apostle of Christ has explained the principles of his religion better than this prophet did seven hundred years before Christ appeared. In fact, you turn to the writings of this prophet rather than to any New Testament description for a summary of the fates and fortunes of the Saviour. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah has dictated to christendom its conception of Christ. You think of the Saviour

in Isaiah's terms rather than those of any of his contemporaries or of his successors. Whether men have rightly interpreted his meaning or not, the phrase of Isaiah has held the field. That is a marvelous piece of writing—the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah:

“Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

“For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.”

It is not to be wondered at that seven hundred years afterward an officer of the court of Ethiopia said to Philip: “I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or of some other?” It has been the standing question of six and twenty centuries. No language uttered by man has provoked more thought than this familiar yet strange utterance of Isaiah. You may say the whole body of theology for eighteen centuries has grown out from it and been grouped around it.

But if theology has depended upon the fifty-third of Isaiah, religion certainly has upon the fifty-fifth. What would be the function of a Christian minister to-day if he could not give this invitation? “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” In what language can a Christian minister frame expostulation other than this? “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your

labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live."

How shall a Christian minister frame an exhortation except in these terms? "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."

The gospel, if it is gospel at all, is a proclamation of the forgiveness of sins. Has that proclamation ever been put in a way better than this to cheer and strengthen and encourage a downcast, sin-troubled soul? "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Put that with this from the first chapter: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," and you have the full gospel of the forgiveness of sins.

There is a political stamp upon the religion of Isaiah and it comes about in this way—it is so feasible "to cease to do evil and to learn to

do well," and God's tender mercies are so abounding that there is no reason why any man should die. Everybody can be saved and Isaiah wants to save everybody. He wants to gather up all the people, not simply to pluck a few brands from the burning, but to save the nation. "O God, give me Scotland or I die!" cried John Knox. That was the feeling of Isaiah—"I want Israel, all Israel; yea, even I crave the world for righteousness."

So you can see how religion and patriotism and philanthropy came to be welded together in the soul of this great man.

But time runs against us. We must leave our subject, great and absorbing as it is. How utterly inadequate is such a sketch to give comprehension of this great prophet of Israel!

A lecture on the anatomy of the human hand fails to set forth the significance of the hand of your friend. To know that, you must grasp it in connection with the life to which it belongs. You must know the meaning of the heart pulsations that send forth to it its power of cunning mystery or ministry of love. The hand has significance only as you have it in connection with the total personality—mind, disposition, sentiment—to which it belongs.

We snatch a verse or a chapter from out the works of the great poet, prophet, statesman, and say, Behold Isaiah! Oh, no! You cannot behold Isaiah unless you restore his whole problem. You need to construct the living man—need to see him in connection with the politics and moral condition of his nation—need to know the setting of that nation amid the surrounding nations—need to know the mental and moral forces at work among all the then civilized nations of the earth—need to cast a sharply scrutinizing glance on the dark, portentous outlying barbarisms whose troops of horsemen sometimes already ride up to the gates of cities plethoric with wealth—need some such broad outlook before the foundations of acquaintance with Isaiah can be laid.

No text or section of his writings can reveal him. We want the whole man in the totality of his relations.

Some one goes down to Nahant, stoops down and takes up a handful of water. It came from the sea, but it is not the sea. Look up and out; there, farther than the eye can pierce, farther even than imagination can steadily guide, lies the sea, "the restless, seething sea," the sea

stretching its long arms out and clasping the full earth round, tumbling in its own freedom, heaving with its own might, billowing, weltering, the unfathomable sea, the universal sea—one great whole.

It is as useless to try to cramp Isaiah into miniature sketch as would be the attempt so to treat the sea. Yet he is happy who often looks out on the sea, and Isaiah.

Voice of one crying in the wilderness! unheeded in thine own time, thou art not unheard in this. Thou hast our hearts to-day, and shall yet have as thine own the love and the reverence of the children of men.

NOTE.

Up to date, I am not carried by the higher criticism on Isaiah. I will mention some of the reasons that weigh with me in reaching this decision.

Strike out "Cyrus," as a proper name, and insert in lieu thereof "Kurush," or "Koresh," as a general term, like Pharaoh, Tzar or König, and you have knocked the blocking from beneath the main contention of the higher criticism. But so to treat the term "Cyrus,"

is only to do what has already been done with "Tartan," and "Rabshekah." They are not proper names, but designations of offices. The Revised Version so treats these names, and lays the foundation for similar treatment of "Cyrus," by its marginal reading, "Kurush."

Of course this argument cuts both ways. It not only overturns a main pillar of the higher criticism, but it gives the *coup de main* to the old argument for inspiration from the fact (asserted) that Cyrus was called by name, by the prophet Isaiah, generations before he was born. But that was an inherently unworthy argument, since it put inspiration in the attitude of playing a game of historic bopeep. Cyrus was not such a providential man either generally, or specifically so far as the Jews were concerned, as that he should be singled out as the solitary, or even the leading instance of this sort of vaticination. On the face of the case, Darius was as worthy of pre-mention as Cyrus.

If Chapter xxxix. of Isaiah is good for anything as history, then, in the lifetime of the first Isaiah, Merodach-Baladan, king of Babylon, made an alliance with Hezekiah, king of Judah.

Sayce is authority for saying that at that time

Merodach-Baladan was in alliance with powers beyond the Tigris—(Kurushes?). Granted that the first Isaiah knew anything about the political combinations of his time, and you have a foundation laid for all that is said about a "Kurush." In his exultation in God, Isaiah cries out: "He saith of the deep, Be dry;" "He saith of a Kurush, You are my shepherd."

The philosophy is: "Man's extremity is God's opportunity"—a Kurush from beyond the Tigris can "perform all my pleasure."

Out of general conditions special agencies will be found.

This treatment of the term "Cyrus," reduces the section xl.-lxvi. to harmony with itself, for Cyrus is the solitary proper name in the whole section. Generalize this name and you have taken away the force of the argument for a second Isaiah, derived from the fact that the author seems personally acquainted with the historic Cyrus.

It is only necessary to suppose that Isaiah of Jerusalem, as Matthew Arnold calls him, knew what was going on about him to lay a foundation for this reference to a "Kurush," or for any other coloring in respect to time or event

of seemingly later date. Is it not better to load a good deal more on Isaiah's knowledge and less on his subjective psychoses or on inspiration? Isaiah ought to be regarded as the Edmund Burke, the Daniel Webster or the James G. Blaine of his time—a man who knew the forces working in his own nation and in the nations round about, and whereto they tended.

When the Turks had taken Adrianople and the adjacent territory in Europe, it would not have required extraordinary mental processes to come to the conclusion that Constantinople must also fall; though it was a hundred years before that event happened. The problem before Isaiah in respect to Jerusalem was substantially the same after the fall of Samaria as that of Constantinople after the fall of Adrianople. Jerusalem must go the same way Samaria had gone. The power is in the East; Jerusalem is foredoomed; it is only a question of time when the end will come. As to the powers in Mesopotamia—Babylonia, properly called (Sayce)—it is only a question of time also in regard to them when their overthrow must come. East of the rivers was the coming power. The Persian stood to Nineveh and Babylon much as

the Goth did to Greece and Rome when he was crowding on the Danube.

The wild, strong men, in either case, stood facing the rivers, and it would scarcely take Divine revelation or even inspiration to tell what would happen. The destiny was manifest. The strong son of the earth beyond the Tigris will bear sway over all. Jerusalem will fall, and Babylon will fall.

Why not let Isaiah *know* something about these *prophetic conditions* and let him speak out of his knowledge? So he may utter the decrees of God.

There are indications that Isaiah was a man of wide and close observation. "Ho, to the land rustling with wings, beyond the rivers of Ethiopia"—is a touch Isaiah could hardly have laid on his canvas, had he not snared and speared fowl on the hills and in the lakes of Abyssinia, as they converge there for a winter home in their retreat from Europe and Armenia. If he had been in Abyssinia, there is no reason why he should not know about a Kurush beyond the Tigris, because he had ridden a camel in his retinue in Persia or Bactria.

Widen out this man Isaiah, let him know

something by observation and experience, and you have diminished the difficulty of interpreting the works that bear his name, and taken away most of the force of the objections to their unity. We should make of him a greater man than we have hitherto allowed him to be. He was probably a cosmopolite in fact before he became such in theory. That is the natural order for development like his.

One objection raised by some of the higher critics to the assignment of the sections xl.-lxxvi. to Isaiah of Jerusalem, is so simple as to be charming. The objection is that Isaiah in the time of Hezekiah could not have treated of a return when no captivity had taken place. It is even laid down as a canon that prophecy can speak only in the future tense, not in the future perfect. It seems a little strange that Divine inspiration cannot do as much as the natural faculties of man can, a little strange that it could not run along the grooves of those faculties. We have a future perfect tense and we are all as valuable in it as we are in the future. We work not only the future tense, but a future perfect and a paulo-post future perfect in vista unlimited. There are few of us who have lived half a cent-

ury that long before the war did not prophesy the destruction of slavery and then try our powers on the problems that would be subsequent. There is a goodly number, I imagine, who have not been deprived of the comfort of saying, "I told you so," with reference to something on the line of these subsequent problems. But more, the objection is not intelligent. "Salvation by the remnant" is a distinguishing element in the works of Isaiah of Jerusalem. To write the second section, xl.-lxvi., he had only to elaborate a theme already burnt in upon his soul.

Arguments for diversity of origin of the book of Isaiah from literary considerations, as style, etymology, are risky. Three thousand years from this time it will probably be argued from literary characteristics that Tennyson could not have written "The Northern Farmer," and "In Memoriam."

But no matter what the literary diversities may be, there is something that runs beneath them all and overcomes all their force. There is a *psychological unity* from I. to LXVI. The essential ideas that underlie the works of the first Isaiah, underlie the work of the second

also. The scribes, if such there were, who put the works of these two men together and abolished one of them were well witted. There is need of but one. The essential ideas of the second Isaiah in the great "Song of the Return" were reached over and over again by the first. The formula of the first Isaiah is: captivity (predicted), return, consequences—universal righteousness. The formula of the second is: captivity (assumed), return, consequences—universal righteousness.

In both the Messianic conception comes in as a means to the end involved in the universal ethical consequences. Suppose in the one place the Messianic idea is of a king, in the other that of a servant—what of it? The two conceptions are not inherently inconsistent. It may be the function of a king, sometimes to serve. "Ich dien," is the motto of the Prince of Wales. A crown may be fore-doomed to tragedy. There is no reason why the same mind might not have entertained even diverse ideas in different stages of its career, or developed now one function of a Messiah and now another. The conception of a king might suit "the fiery heart of youth;" something less forceful and strenuous, more

spiritual, the pensiveness of mellow age. The two ideas are easily adjustable when viewed in the large, indefinite way in which they are treated by Isaiah.

Why should not Isaiah of Jerusalem have sung the "Song of the Return?" He was so impenetrated with its ideas that he named his son "Shear-Jashub," "Remnant shall Return." Of all men of all time such a man was the man to write this song. Section xl.-lxvi. is merely "Shear Jashub" expanded. Why does not the rule here apply, that when you have a sufficient cause for an effect, one more natural than any other, you can rest? The "Song of the Return" is wrought in miniature again and again in the first section.

It may be asserted that it would be a psychological impossibility for the "Song of the Return" to have been written at the time the captivity was verging to its close without more marks of time, place, manner and condition being left upon it. The total work is contemplative, indefinite, philosophical—such a work as one would write for an exigency conceived to lie in the future, not for one then pressing. So indefinite is this poem, that there is not a mark

about it to tell where it was written, whether in Jerusalem, Babylon or Damascus. It would be impossible for an old man even, writing at the time of the return, or on the eve of its activity, not to have caught up some thrill from the pulse of the time, and to have made a call on the Jews for some specific acts that would tend to secure the success of the return.

Read this section to a camp of over-land pioneers of forty-eight on the plains bound for California, or of fifty-nine bound for Pike's Peak, and tell them it was a call upon a people to execute a journey under circumstances similar to their own, and you would get the reply: "Go to, now, there is nothing natural in all this, nothing that sounds of teamsters driving in the oxen. There is not even the primitive call in it to get up a company." And your critics would be right. There is not a thing about the section from beginning to end adapted to a living, pressing exigency.

Given a time when an "enterprise of great pith and moment" was crowding to the front, or was on the field, in view of its demands, the very splendor of the section becomes failure, profound and melancholy. Instead of hitting

the exigency of the return, the "Song of the Return" always ricochets over the return to come down on the great universal ethical effects beyond. The work is such as a man would do who was contemplating a disaster to his nation, and yet could not give up the thought that there was something about that nation that would survive and ultimately bless all mankind. Isaiah had optimism enough about him to believe

"That good shall fall
At last, far off, at last to all,
And every winter change to spring."

But just what distinguishes Isaiah is the "far-offness" of his contemplated events. No man would be writing in this way in Jerusalem beleagured, or in Babylon with the invincible Cyrus bearing down upon or in possession of it. But a man would write in Isaiah's way who was contemplating disaster and discipline as a necessity for Jerusalem in the retributive and righteous government of God, out from which must still come blessing to Zion and to men.

It would take comment on the whole section in minuteness to bring out the force of the foregoing suggestion. But read Chap. liii.—"Who hath believed our report?" and Chap. lv.—"Ho, every one that thirsteth," and Chap. lviii.—

“Cry aloud, spare not,” and see how malapropos they are to a call to go up to Jerusalem and rebuild its walls. In such state of affairs, even the very first word in the section—“Comfort ye my people”—is a false note.

The people with whom Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah wrought did not need comfort, they needed a gad. The generations on the stage with them had been born in Babylonia. What was Jerusalem to them or they to Jerusalem? They were adjusted to Babylonia. They had thrived there. The Jew has always been realistic enough to adapt himself to circumstances. To sacrifice himself by going back to Jerusalem, must have seemed to him unpractical idealism. It is unthinkable, that a great man living in the time of the captivity should not have uttered a call for some specific acts adapted to the return, even that he should not have appealed to specific men to have ideals worthy of their fathers. There is nothing of all this in the “Song of the Return.” It is as oblivious of particulars respecting the return as it is of those pertaining to the captivity. On the theory of the higher critics, the greatest man of the day sails in the air over this crisis and never once touches the earth to adapt himself to it.

Credat Judæus Apella!

When you come to the matter of the further disintegration of Isaiah so as to make his works a collection from various writers at different times, I can only say that I am not impressed with the soundness of the philosophy or scholarship which attributes the great literary results which mark history to "the fortuitous concourse" of intellects. "Every house is builded by some man."

The masterpieces of literature are the outcome of the activity of the world's great minds, not the collected dribbling of an infinity of small ones. The majestic harmony of Isaiah throughout never tumbled together out of a tendency, it was born of the travail of one great soul. Isaiah of Jerusalem *could* write what passes under his name. There is not only no evidence to show that any one else *did* write anything attributed to him, but that there was any one in being who *could* write it.

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VI.

IMPRECATORY PSALMS.

WHAT are called Imprecatory Psalms are often considered a great stumbling block to religion. We take for consideration the moral difficulties presented by such Psalms. If all our troubles are not met we may strike a drift of thought that may tend toward the resolution of many of them. Expressions that are thought imprecatory may often be no more than the utterance of the longing of a soul for the execution of justice upon wrong-doing. To prayer of that sort no one ought to be a stranger. There is a basis for such prayer in our very nature to which the Christian religion has never set itself in antagonism. It is from the pen of the very apostle of love that we get a representation of saints, beneath the altar of God, crying: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell upon the earth?"

There may be a desire for justice without any malevolent feeling running along with it.

Out of the one hundred and fifty Psalms there are not more than four whose imprecatory expressions may not at once be referred to this desire for justice, and so not only be tolerable but laudable in their character.

There are, however, a few that in some expressions seem to go beyond this, and that may seem to us to be charged with the spirit of malevolence. But perhaps in ultimate analysis these few exceptional cases can be referred to the same great inclusive rule. If they cannot, that will furnish a reason for setting them aside—not for neglect of the great mass not so tainted with malevolence. For purposes of such analysis let us examine the extremest case.

Psalms 137 begins: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion." This Psalm is, of course, a Psalm of the captivity. It ends: "O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones." No other Psalm presents more difficulties than this.

What can cast light on this case will be likely to illuminate any other. In fact, any treatment we give this case will be applicable to the difficulties that spring out of the directions, as from the Lord, to the Israelites in their wars with the Canaanites. The philosophy that covers the one case will cover the other.

Let us bear in mind a few fundamental principles. No principle is more widely accepted in religion than that of the progressiveness of revelation. The times of ignorance God overlooks, is a good Biblical statement of the principle.

The alteration in the moral horizon of men which the providential working of this principle makes, is too frequently lost from sight. Within a generation often you see a new moral heavens and earth. We do not think it right to make the social use of rum that our grandfathers did. It would be sin for us to do as they did, but does it follow that it was sin in them to do as we do not? You get an answer to such question by applying the principle of the progressiveness of revelation to the case. The sin in the use of rum had not come up to the moral perception of our grandfathers as it has to us. Men are judged by the light they have, not by the light which afterward appears on the moral horizon.

Now we are in position to lay down some ethical corollaries. The disposition to do right is the essential characteristic of religion. The perception of what is right is a measure of the stage of ethical civilization. In this connection it may be said that Buckle is right in his major premise, that all progress is through intellectual process, but stupidly wrong in his minor premise, that there is no intellectual element in morals and religion, and hence his conclusion that there is no progress in morals and religion falls. There is as much progress in the intellectual perception of the application of the principles of morals and religion as in any other department of human activity.

If men still living can remember the invention of railway locomotion, and telegraph and telephone communication, they can also remember how in morals we have moved away from the generation preceding in estimate of the wrong in human slavery and in the use of intoxicant drinks.

Now the Christian religion does not teach us that we are to imitate the civilization of the worthies of old. The Christian religion does not teach us that their perception of what is

right is to be a guide for us. The disposition with which the prophets and psalmists approached the questions which pertain to God and society is an imitable thing. For instance, Abraham was called the "friend of God." He was so called because his disposition was right toward God. He was willing to do and meant to do what God wanted him to do, just so far and just so fast as God made it known to him. But Abraham was a polygamist. Polygamy to us is sin. Was it to Abraham? The perception of what was right in the matter of the relations of the sexes to each other had not dawned upon his mind. God had not revealed it to him, nor had the civilization of his times wrestled with that problem. Such was Abraham's disposition, however, toward God, that we feel sure if God had revealed to him or impressed upon him the perception of the right on this subject which we have, he would gladly have held to the theory and practice which we do.

But his disposition was perfect, for he did the best he could according to the light he had.

The matter of the separate individuality of women and children is one that we think perhaps very clear, but it is an idea that man has

been very slow in acquiring. The old idea was either that a wife and children were a man's property or that they were parts of himself. They were regarded as so identified with him that the same treatment that was due him was due them also. The punishment that was due a man was regarded as not fully inflicted till it had fallen on his wife and children. Wife and child in ancient times were property. To this day the property of an enemy is subject to destruction.

Now, it is all very easy to throw up both hands here and shout, "Barbarous!" But what do you mean by barbarous? To be barbarous is not necessarily sinful. Do you mean that all mankind have meant to do wrong in this matter of the individuality of women and children? We need not judge antiquity so harshly. It is better to think that men did not perceive the right rather than that perceiving it they withstood it. Read "Maine's Ancient Law," and you will see how widely in ancient society the father had the absolute right of life and death over the child. It could hardly be, but that whatever right the father had, would be conceived as falling to his captors in war. That would be

unethical judgment for us, but was it necessarily so in ancient society?

It may be worth our while to see how far down the ages this mergence of the identity and fates of women and children in the fortunes of the male head of the family has traveled. According to the historian Green, "Mine is the calf that is born of my cow," is what the old Saxon said when he wished to sell his child into slavery. Wife and child, cow and calf were on equal footing as property with the Saxon.

The advocates of the rights of woman will tell you that this low estimate of woman persists yet in some very obnoxious forms. A generation only ago, in many respects, such a being as a married woman was unknown to the law. This same principle of mergence of wife and child in the husband and father has hovered over our civilization in some very severe aspects to a very late date.

Take up the Constitution of the United States, and you read a prohibition upon both the general government and the government of the states against passing bills of attainder. Whatever attainder was, it is certain that its principle was still so mingled in the elements of our civ-

ilization that those who framed the Constitution feared that it would crop out in actual result. In fact, it had cropped out, and bills of attainder had been passed by several colonies during the revolution and the existence of the Confederation.

But what was the effect of a bill of attainder? Its very principle was to involve a family in the ruin of its male head. It worked corruption of blood, as it was called, as well as confiscation of property. That is, it made the children incapable of receiving anything through their attainted father. Neither rank nor property could come to them through him. Well, this was involving the innocent in the fate of the guilty. But almost within the lifetime of a centenarian that kind of principle was enacted into law by the assembled legislative wisdom of a Colony, in fact by our Revolutionary Fathers.

Blackstone says of the attainted person: "When it is now clear beyond dispute that the criminal is no longer fit to live upon the earth, but is to be exterminated as a monster and a bane to human society, the law sets a note of infamy upon him." That is as strong language as David used towards his enemies. But is it

necessary to charge attainder as sin against English and American society of a century ago? There was a writ of attaint still English law, when Blackstone wrote, that ran against a jury who had found a false verdict. Now it would seem that if there was anything for which a man's wife and children should not suffer, it would be a crime that he might commit while he was away from them shut up on a jury. But this judgment of attaint, according to Blackstone, ran thus: "That the jurors should lose all right at law and become forever infamous; should forfeit their goods and the profits of their lands; should themselves be imprisoned and their wives and children thrown out of doors; should have their houses razed, their trees extirpated." That kind of thing within two centuries was liable to be enforced as English law. It has been English law till within a generation, that a defendant summoned into court might throw down his glove and demand that the plaintiff fight him. Wager of battle as a method of deciding legal disputes between man and man stood in English law to the middle of this century.

Now it will hardly do to say that there was

no religion, no disposition to do right in England, when wager of battle was an existing legal practice. Why, the very formula with which a matter was committed to this method of settlement was: "God defend the right." A poor way of getting at the right, we say—to expect it to come out of the physical prowess of the burliest bully, but it would be hard to prove that we have any more attachment to the right than the generations who tried to find it by the hazard of battle. There has come up to our horizon a perception of better methods of determining what is right, and in this consists such superiority as we may have over our ancestors.

We are not to charge our Revolutionary Fathers who enacted bills of attainder, or the body of the English people among whom the action of attain or wager of battle prevailed, with wickedness and malevolence. They simply had not a clear conception of the idea of individuality, in cases of attainder and attain. They had not got out from under the shadow of the view of the past that you might chase a criminal for punishment into all that belonged to him, and into all that were nearly related to him.

Doubtless such laws furnished opportunities for the exercise of malevolence. I would not say that it was not often exercised under them. But he would be a bold man who should charge malevolence upon the whole civilization out of which these laws sprung, who should say that malevolence necessarily inhered in it, so that no one could seek the execution of such laws unless he were malevolent. What we consider cruelty is simply part and parcel of an ancient conception of justice. Here is an illustrative extract taken from the *Contemporary Review*, September, 1876: "For less favored convicts (than those guilty of high treason) it was till 1814 ordered, that they should be drawn on a hurdle to the place of execution and there hanged by the neck, but that they should be taken down again, and that when they were yet alive their bowels should be taken out and burned before their faces, and that afterward their heads should be severed from their bodies and their bodies be divided into four quarters and their heads and quarters be at the king's disposal." This law till 1814!

When you pass over to consider the laws of war of ancient times you see the condition of

the mergence of the rights of women and children more clearly brought out. Ancient war meant extermination. In the early stages of all civilizations a man was not considered dead till his wife and child or wives and children were killed. Objection is raised against the Israelites because they were to go into Canaan on the principle of extermination. There was no nation under heaven that did not carry on war on that plan in their day. The Canaanites did it. They would have cut the throats of every Jewish woman and child they could capture, and any command, as Divine authority to the Jew to do the same thing, was only saying that they might have the privileges of the laws of war of their times. To have demanded anything less of the Israelites when they must necessarily go into war would have seemed to them like being commanded to whip an enemy with their hands tied behind their backs. When God got ready to "let slip the dogs of war" he let slip such dogs as were on hand; he did not wait to develop a new breed.

Professor Schurman of Cornell, in his book "The Ethical Import of Darwinism," puts the matter under view thus: "Life has no sacred-

ness *per se* among savages; and children, and old men as useless members of the community, are, under the stern law of necessity, or of custom crystallized from it, frequently put to death. This, however, must not be confounded with murder, since among primitive peoples children fall under the category of property, and are, therefore, like slaves or other chattels, at the absolute disposition of the head of the house, as is forcibly illustrated in Roman law. In time of war Christian nations think it right to kill, and the normal condition of the savage is one of war with the rest of mankind as enemy. Women and children were regarded as property before they were regarded as persons."

When we sent our soldiers out to fight the late civil war, are we to suppose they had any malevolent feelings towards the individual persons against whom they leveled their muskets? It is not necessary to attribute that feeling to them any more than it is to attribute malevolence to a sheriff toward a person whom he executes. So even when a war of extermination was carried on, it is not necessary to assume that any more wickedness lay beneath it than beneath the effort of our own brothers and sons to shoot

their antagonists in the late rebellion, when you come to consider the idea of the times as to mergence of women and children in the men—to consider that in the wife and child men saw the enemy, as well as in the man himself.

War furnishes occasion for malevolence, but it does not necessarily inhere in war. A man can kill according to the laws of war which now prevail, without being charged with sin in the sight of God. A man could kill according to the laws of war in the days of the Israelites without being charged with sin in the sight of God.

But we can turn our backs in contempt upon the horrid laws of war of the Jews, and congratulate ourselves that we have progressed infinitely beyond them, can we not? Have we made so very great progress? We shell cities to-day, careless whether in the operation we shiver women and children or not. And we have not the excuse that our civilization merges a wife in her husband, and that we do not know any better, for we do. The religion of our war differs from the religion of the Israelites only in the element of distance. We can kill our women and children a mile or nine miles off, and so we seem very humane in comparison with

those who had to do it hand to hand. We have added to our religion of war just what religion there is in powder; that is all.

Doctor Bartol, in a recent number of the "Forum," says: "The warlike and warring nation hails with joy every invention of chassepot, needle gun, minnie ball, rifled cannon, monitor or torpedo. Charles Sumner and Francis Wayland both argued that the distinction which makes some lethal instruments legitimate, and brands others with immorality and shame, is absurd. The whole difficulty resolves itself into the question whether war is justifiable at all or not. If it is justifiable at all, then it is justifiable to carry it on according to the civilization of particular times."

Whether war is justifiable or not depends entirely upon the importance of the cause at stake in it. Men have always so judged and so they always will, so long as these two opposite principles of love for the right and of selfishness are struggling together for the possession of humanity. There was grim sense in the telegram sent by the soldiers of the Army of the Potomac at a reunion in Boston a few years ago to the Peace Society then holding a session in New York.

The Peace Society telegraphed to the army men: "Let us have peace." And the army men replied: "We will have peace if we have to fight for it."

To say nothing of other wars, take the civil war in France when the Commune got possession of Paris. It was justifiable, it was right for the national government, at whose head stood Thiers, to drop its shells into Paris. If they fell among women and children, so must it be. Women and children will hereafter live in greater safety by all the destruction wrought by the shells which overthrew the Commune. In like manner it can be shown that the wars of the Israelites were seeds of peace, of morals and civilization for all after-coming humanity. Their wars will stand justified by the cause they represented. The Israelites stood even then for more humanity in war than the surrounding nations. "Behold now, we have heard that the kings of Israel are merciful kings" is testimony that comes to us from the neighboring nations as to the reputation they had gained among them.

They stood for the principle of the sacredness of the life of a child. In war though they might

pray that their enemies' children might be dashed against the stones, yet remember that not in war, but in peace, those nations took those same children, their own too, and burned them to ashes in the arms of their gods. The wars of the Israelites were better for humanity than the peace of their neighbors.

The Israelites stood for the inviolable purity of woman. The nations by whom they were surrounded taught prostitution as a religious act and used it as an arm of war. To the Israelite prostitution was a crime; to the Canaanite a celebration in his so-called religion, without which no woman was assigned to a husband. The wars of the Israelites were better for woman than the peace of the surrounding nations.

The Israelites so stood for the principle of individuality that at the time of Christ no other nation so fully recognized the right of a man to himself when he became of age.

In the later days of their nationality they were first on the road in the emancipation of woman, by declaring as no other nation did the substantial equality of woman with man, in their established social custom that no man should have but one woman to wife. Can there be

such a thing as righteous prayer to God for the success of arms in a holy cause? Look again at the prayer of these sad captives by the rivers of Babylon, and consider that all they prayed for was what was allowed by the laws of war of their time, that that differs not at all from what we do when we bombard a town even in our own day.

It is one thing to bear malice to individuals, it is quite another to be attached to a cause which one feels must succeed even at the expense of war.

The role of suffering is not always to be played. We are to suffer wrong rather than to do wrong. But there are times when forbearing to smite ceases to be a virtue. There are times when the right must pray to be might, when it must put on the nerve to make itself might, whatever stands in the way.

Men in this situation may be obliged to bombard towns, not because they would kill women and children, but that women and children may not be killed. If it be necessary for the peace of nations for many generations, that another nation be chastised, the work must be done. We have not yet found how to do this kind of

work so delicately as not to hurt anybody. So long as we have not, we are in no position to sit in judgment on those in ancient times who were in the same darkness as ourselves. If you want to get a right point of view of the matter, instead of sitting down to cool criticism of it in your comfortable parlors, or approaching with the careless levity that loves to turn a handsome point in a village debating society, go down to Andersonville and see if you think that prayer would rise in essentially different shape from the hearts of your own brothers, husbands, fathers, sons, as haggard and wan they staggered to the filthy streams, uncertain whether they would drink from them, or the bullet of the guard would spill their blood in them, or as with their weak hands they dug holes in the earth to shelter themselves from the burning sun or the storms of heaven. Look in there, and you have a different impression of the Divine heart from what I have, if you suppose that their prayers to the extent of the laws of war were heinous in the Divine eyes. You have a different notion of righteousness from what I have, if you suppose it was a sin for those men, conscious of what they stood for in the civilization of humanity, to

pray that shells might fall into Richmond, even if women were involved in its destruction, and those women essentially combatants, not non-combatants. A clean sweep of non-combatants even might seem to them necessary that Andersonvilles and their like might be no more, and that women and children to all coming time might be wrung no more with anguish over kindred barbarities.

In this light go back to the captives of Babylon. Remember that they are captives of war, that they and their children are held in contact with unspeakable moral abominations; then if you insist that there is sin in their prayer, you must take it upon yourself to decide that they had a moral light on war that the civilized and Christianized nations of the earth have not yet attained, and that they loved the little children of Babylon less, rather than Zion, and what it stood for, more.

VII.

A MISSING CHAPTER IN THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL.

WE are now in an era of archæological "finds."

Within a few years the mummy of the Pharaoh who exchanged living glances with Moses has been identified. We may say we probably have the skull of Sophocles and the tomb of Aristotle. Lost Greek and Latin treatises are restored. Documents of the early Christian literature, of the first and second centuries, which we have heard of only by "the hearing of the ear," or of which we have had only snatches quoted by later authors, are brought out from, perhaps, palimpsest hiding, in full, to the delight of scrutinizing eyes. Some of these documents are not only interesting in themselves, but they are of great value in the determination of the questions that have arisen concerning the authorship and the date of origin of the gospels and of the

other components of the New Testament. Here is a document, the Gospel of St. Peter, recently brought to light in Egypt, that was, in fair certainty, afloat by the middle of the second century. It is valuable as proving the earlier existence of our gospels. It is especially valuable as forming an additional link in the chain of evidence which is invincibly compelling the conviction that the Gospel of John was in existence at the close of the first century. The "theosophist" of the second century, as the author of this gospel, must retire from the stage to give place to the historically accredited author, John, if fair weight is given to this and kindred pieces of evidence.

Professor Thayer, formerly of Andover, now of the Harvard Divinity School, a ripe scholar, and of judicial bent, says of the evidence afforded by the Gospel of Peter: "Half a century of discussion is swept away by the recent discovery at a stroke. Brief as is the recovered fragment, it attests indubitably all four of our canonical books." All the "finds" of the day seem to lie in the direction of the confirmation of the history of the gospels as we have usually understood. They all fall one way. So much has been found

recently by archæological researches that it is now getting to be a proverb in that realm that "anything may happen."

It takes one's breath away to think that we may yet look upon the ashes of St. Paul. If we go no further than we now are, we probably know the exact spot of his final burial. Lanciani, whose record of recent archæological researches in Rome we can now read in English editions, and whose own work is brilliant and valuable, has within two years looked upon an inscription of the century of Constantine, which purports to cover the spot where the body of St. Paul lies. There is no reason now known why this inscription should not be true. The early Christians were careful about the sepulture of their martyrs.

Tradition from the days of Constantine has asserted the tomb of Paul to be at this particular spot. Now Lanciani finds the inscription to verify the tradition. Here I want to call attention to the force of tradition. Tradition is usually "the survival of the fittest" on the historic line. Men have always written, and told the truth from mouth to mouth, pretty much as they do now—nine times the thing that is, to once the

thing that is not. It must have been so, or the race itself could not have survived. "Say so" has always given title to land. Tradition before the fourth century is as likely to be right as that subsequent to that date. Constantine was as likely to be correct with regard to the body he so carefully and expensively buried as the later ages in regard to the location of Constantine's memorial church. But *in re* the sepulcher of St. Paul, see Lanciani, "Pagan and Christian Rome."

I wish to treat rather of what I will call—a missing chapter in the life of St. Paul.

The book of "The Acts of the Apostles" closes with Paul under arrest at Rome, awaiting trial before the Emperor. Two years are thus spent. To cover all that period, Luke (for we will assume him to be the author of the Acts) simply says that Paul was preaching and teaching in confidence and without hindrance, and there his record shuts down. The question is, can we trace Paul's life more fully or further, and if we can, what are our sources of information? It will readily occur that if Paul wrote any letters during the two years or afterward, these might give us some additional light.

Now there are several Epistles which on their face show that they were written while he was bound at Rome. It is but little light that these letters give, for they were written not so much to chronicle his own affairs, as to correct, comfort and strengthen the churches to whom they were directed. But there are now and then incidental allusions to himself in them. These references perhaps show but little more than that the summary Luke has given of those two years is correct. But as one instance, we know that Paul made converts to Christianity in Nero's own household. See Philippians I. 13, 14, 22. We can well believe this, for we can see pretty clearly how it might come about.

Nero's mistress, Poppea (perhaps we may call her his wife according to Roman law, for he had murdered his former wife Octavia, after he was divorced from her), was a Jewess. Many Jews would naturally be in her body of attendants in the imperial household. With these Paul would be likely to communicate and through them have access to the gentiles of the court. For he was a prisoner of state and would be likely often to be brought, by the guard who was set over him, into the quarters about the palace.

We have seen what influence Paul acquired over Julius, the Roman centurion who took him to Rome, and from the glimpse we get in the letters written during the imprisonment his natural force seems not abated. Besides these letters there are some things we can construct out of the known course of Roman law. We can tell with some degree of accuracy what was the course of trial in his case.

Profane history gives us the forms of procedure in the case of Roman citizens accused of capital crimes as Paul was. However unjust the final decision might be, these forms were observed somewhat scrupulously even by the most abandoned of the Emperors.

From our knowledge of the Roman law we know that Paul was not put to death by torture when the end came.

Roman citizens were put to death by decapitation. We know the customary ground outside the walls on the road to Ostia where these executions took place. Thus we have a clue of a very high kind of probability in the known course of Roman law.

Then we have another source in tradition. We popularly class under the term tradition

everything pertaining to the subjects treated in the Scriptures, that is outside our canon. This term is often stretched over not only that mass of floating material that passes from mouth to mouth and is never committed to writing, but even over the writings of the early church fathers; of course this is done in order to distinguish clearly between the inspired canon and all other sources of information. But care should be taken, in exalting the canon, not to degrade history.

The writings of these early church fathers, if they are not inspired as we hold our Scriptures to be, yet have a place in history and are to be treated as all other historical documents. If the works are genuine their statements are to have the same credit as is accorded to all other ancient histories. It is to be regretted that we are not better acquainted with this class of works, which sprang up under the tuition of the Christian church in its early days. We know something about the events that are covered by our Scripture record, but at the end of the New Testament history the night shuts down upon us, and almost all that is this side is a blank.

We have then this third source of aid in our

attempts to construct the remainder of the life of St. Paul, to wit: early church history. From their own contents we can make out that the letters to Philemon, to the churches at Colosse, Ephesus and Philippi, were written during the imprisonment at Rome, the account of the beginning of which is given us in Acts. The two epistles to the Thessalonians, the two to the church at Corinth, the one to the Romans and the one to the Galatians, were written before this imprisonment. There remain the two epistles to Timothy and the one to Titus, commonly called the Pastoral Epistles, the time of whose writing is to be accounted for. A slight examination of their contents reveals the fact that they were written under different circumstances from any that had occurred up to the end of the imprisonment spoken of in the Acts.

These epistles reveal the fact that they were written late in the life of their author, and two of them, the one to Titus and the first to Timothy, were written when Paul was not in prison at all. The second to Timothy reveals the fact that Paul was in prison, but in very different situation from that spoken of by Luke and revealed in the epistles that we know he sent

forth at that time. The terms, too, in which Luke describes the duration of that imprisonment, imply a termination of it by release and not by death.

Instead of translating: "Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house," we should translate: "The two-year period the whole of it." On the face of our text, then, the implication is a fair one that this two-year period was terminated when Luke wrote, and, if Paul were put to death then, it is impossible to conceive why Luke should not have mentioned it. We are perhaps now prepared to look into early church history. Clemens Romanus, who was the first elder or presbyter or bishop of the church at Rome, was a disciple of Paul. He is mentioned by Paul in his letter to the church of Philippi. Clement wrote an epistle to the church of Corinth that has survived to this time, and is one of the most interesting documents which we possess in confirmation of our Scriptures. He being in Rome, and writing from Rome to the church at Corinth, says "Paul preached the gospel in the east and in the west, and that he had instructed the whole world in righteousness and that he had gone to the extremity of the west before his martyrdom."

Now from Rome, "the extremity of the west" could have been nothing short of the shore of the Atlantic Ocean. Other Roman writers can be shown to have used commonly this expression, "the extremity of the west," for the regions bordering on the ocean. Now bear in mind that Clement is Paul's own disciple, is contemporary with him and is known to have survived him, and that there is not a slip of history to contradict him, but that subsequent references to the matter by the fathers all confirm him, and we are justified in saying that Paul must have been released on this first imprisonment and have made his way to the west, probably to Spain, as he intended to do if he should have opportunity. Another document of high historical repute has some testimony on the matter. It is what is known as Muratori's Canon. This document was a compilation of the books of the New Testament, with comments upon their history. Its author is unknown. Its date is fairly fixed at about one hundred years subsequent to the time of Paul. In this document it is said, in the account of "The Acts of the Apostles," that "Luke relates to Theophilus events of which he was an eye-witness, as also

in a separate place he evidently declares the martyrdom of Peter, but omits the journey of Paul from Rome to Spain."

Just about one hundred years after the compilation of this Muratori Canon, Eusebius comes on the stage. He has earned the title, "The Father of Ecclesiastical History." He was an industrious scholar and ransacked the world for every fragment of church history. He says: "After defending himself successfully, the report or history runs, that he (Paul) went forth again to preach the gospel. And coming again to the city (Rome), he suffered martyrdom under Nero." Some fifty years later than Eusebius, Chrysostom, one of the most eloquent and learned men in the whole history of the church, says that Paul, after his residence in Rome, departed to Spain. Jerome, a contemporary of Chrysostom and a critical scholar, writes: "Paul was dismissed by Nero that (result) he might preach Christ's gospel in the west." Conybeare and Howson, from whom I take these citations of history, say: "Against this unanimous testimony of the primitive church there is no external evidence whatever to oppose." Now if it were a matter of secular history that we were

considering, the view that we are taking would seem to be settled beyond a doubt. Its basis is not oral tradition, but historic record that goes clear back to contemporaries of St. Paul himself. There is no reason why a fact thus verified should not be received as veritable history. Because Clement's works are not in the canon, his statement of facts is not to be denied unless we have counter statements on which to found a denial.

The statements of Tacitus and Pliny are the foundation of Roman history. Like them Clement was a Roman, and we are to receive his statements as fact when we have no counter-vailing authority; unless we are prepared to take the ground that a heathen Roman could write reliable history while a Christian Roman could not. There is a psychological probability that comes in to reinforce this history. Paul, to put it mildly, was a somewhat strenuous and willful man, and he would be very likely to execute what he projected.

I will now give the general drift of the conclusions of scholars on the problem. We are quite sure that Paul's martyrdom did not take place till the last year of Nero's reign, the year

68 A. D. His release from the first imprisonment is located in the year 63 A. D. There are then about five years to be added to the end of the history in the Acts before the termination of Paul's career. In this time we may place the journey to Spain. How many times he was over the old ground in Asia Minor and Greece we do not know, but we know that he was once there toward the end of his life, for the first letter to Timothy reveals that fact, also the one to Titus.

If one will study the matter thoroughly enough he will be convinced that the latter days of Paul were passed under a black cloud and that he went down in storm. When we see him in the east again, as we do in the first letter to Timothy and the one to Titus, we find matters in very different shape from what they were when he left the region seven or eight years before. There had sprung up the germs of all those heresies that for the next hundred years distracted and enervated the churches in that region. We think we have some wild religious notions now, and some are disposed to pride themselves on actually bringing forth some new and very shining lights in religion. But the

ground of error has been thought over as well as the ground of truth.

These popular new lights can be shown to have tried their powers upon the church in that day as well as in this. Error has its fathers as well as the truth, and the only question between them is the one of respectability of ancestry and the healthfulness of influence in human history. Philosophies that boast their origin within the present generation can be shown to have been as subtly advocated then as now. We have no conception of the activity of mind in those days and regions, and of the rank growth to which every species of theory, from partially to palpably false, in religion attained. Everything was there represented, even down to that teaching which maintains that moral corruption that "smells to heaven" in offensiveness is sweet as

"Sabeian odors from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest,"

or that when a man plunges into debauchery to rottenness he is gently and tenderly threading his way to all perfection and bliss under the light of the God-principle within him. The whole kennel of heresies seems to have been

let loose in the east upon young Christianity at once, and they seemed fairly to drown its still small voice with their wild, discordant ululation. It was doubtless to steady the Christian church in the east that ten to twenty years or so later than this time John put forth the Apocalypse and his version of the gospel.

In the state of the churches of the east at that time we get a clue to the peculiar mould of thought in which that gospel is cast, and which so markedly distinguishes it from the three Synoptics. At some time when the heat was fiercer, John sent into the same quarter from his lone retreat in Patmos those weird, rein-trying letters of the Apocalypse wherein is set forth what the Spirit saith to the churches, with forecast of conflicts yet to be, and of the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of Christ.

It is now in the presence of the beginning of all this commotion that Paul stands. The change has already begun. False teachers are going up and down the churches pursuing "fables and endless genealogies." The church meetings are turned into occasions for disputation instead of the exercise of the stewardship of God unto faith. The babblers have done their work all

too well. Old friends are estranged. All Asia has an averted face. Were Paul a younger man we can conceive with what ardor he would have flung himself into the contest, for he was a man of undaunted nerve in the strength of his day. But he is now an old man and he seems to have known it. There is, perhaps, in the second letter to Timothy a tinge of the melancholy which often comes to tense natures with failing vitality. Nature is exhausted, and the sword of the headsman probably anticipated but a few months the on-coming of the end of which omens were fast writing up in his physical system.

He has planted all over the east and the west, but somebody else must water. Instead of a disposition to take the field on the offensive once more, he seems to have been disposed to pause now and entrench. The contest is not to be abandoned, but it is to be carried on under other leaders. He seems at this time to have given over his special command to Timothy and Titus. And after he had parted with them on their fields of labor he sent each of them a letter detailing the plan of their operations from the point of his spiritual enlightenment and experience, and

these letters have ever been guides to the church as to spirit, doctrine and practice. Paul seems to have made but flitting visits in this last journey through the east. We hear of him in Ephesus, in Crete, in Macedonia, at Nicopolis, but get no knowledge of any lengthened stay in any of those places. And now we verge toward the end. The probabilities are that he passed the winter of 67-8 in Nicopolis of Epirus and was there arrested, and on the opening of navigation in the spring was conveyed to Rome. Out of this imprisonment we have one solitary voice, the second Epistle to Timothy.

Read it and you will see that it could never have come out of the same conditions which we know attended the imprisonment, and from which so many epistles were sent forth to the churches. Then read contemporary history and you will be confirmed in our conclusion and get a key to the reason of the difference.

We know well enough that the two-year period of which Luke speaks terminated in 63 A. D. Up to that time there was no reason why such rigorous confinement should have been visited upon Paul as seems to be set forth in the last letter to Timothy. After that time circum-

stances were greatly changed. In the summer of 64 A. D., the great fire occurred in Rome. Suspicion fell on the Jews and on Nero both, as the authors of that calamity. To shield himself Nero was willing to punish anybody, and would doubtless have availed himself of the suspicion against the Jews, but Poppea defended in that quarter. Up to this time the Christians had been regarded simply as Jews. A Roman converted to Christianity was regarded by the Romans as a proselyte to Judaism. But now the Christian sect began to loom up in importance. Hatred of it on the part of the Jews and their eagerness to save themselves soon diverted to this sect the public attention, and succeeded in fastening upon it the charge of the guilt of that terrible conflagration. And then commenced that persecution of the Christians which continued with unabated fury so long as Nero lived. The Roman historians themselves gave the particulars of this persecution. Among other methods of torture and death, Tacitus tells us that Nero was accustomed to light up his circus grounds at night by setting fire to the bodies of Christians after they had been swathed in sheets saturated with pitch, and that he drove his own chariot in the games when his grounds were thus lighted.

And thus a "vast multitude," says Tacitus, perished. From this kind of torture Paul's citizenship must have saved him. But it could not save him from rigorous confinement and death. He had a first hearing. He seems to have conducted his case with so much vigor as to delay decision for a while. But the furnace is at white heat and he foresees that he is never to come out of it alive.

"On some fond breast the parting soul relies." No one was dearer to him than Timothy. Timothy had wept over him when they last parted. Paul must see him once more and have him with him at the end, if he can; so he exhorts him to come with all speed. Perhaps his second hearing may be delayed till winter comes on. The blood of an old man towards seventy years of age is thin. There is a cloak at Troas, away over the *Ægean*, that would keep off the chills of winter nights. The monotony of his dungeon would be broken if Luke and Timothy could read to him out of his well worn papyrus rolls and select parchments, over which he had pored so much that years before Porcius Festus told him they had made him mad. "Take these and come shortly," runs this last letter to Timothy.

It is possible, though doubtful, whether Timothy ever reached Rome in season to see him, for before the first summer month had expired, both Paul and Nero had gone to their account.

It is not wonderful, as Paul looked back over his career, that he said, "I have fought a good fight." From the time when he fell blinded by the vision of the Lord of Glory on the road to Demascus, up to this last moment, his life was one unbroken contest. Put on the additional five years of hardship and care we have this morning been considering, and Paul would seem to be one of the heroes of human achievement and endurance. And now, though the night was settling in thick and black, there is no faltering, but he reaches forward in the darkness to touch the "crown of righteousness" which he knew the Lord was holding ready to give him.

I can do no better in closing than to give you Conybeare and Howson's description of Paul's execution. You may think it fanciful in some respects, but the more critically you read history the more you will be convinced that the picture can scarcely be other than the fact.

"The privileges of Roman citizenship exempted St. Paul from the ignominious death of

lingering torture, which had been lately inflicted on so many of his brethren. He was to die by decapitation, and he was led out to execution beyond the city walls upon the road to Ostia, the port of Rome. As the martyr and his executioners passed on, their way was crowded with a motley multitude of comers and goers between the metropolis and its harbor; merchants hastening to superintend the unloading of their cargoes, sailors eager to squander the profits of their last voyage in the dissipations of the capital, officials of the government charged with the administration of the provinces or the command of the legions on the Euphrates or the Rhine, Chaldean astrologers, Phrygian eunuchs, dancing girls from Syria with their painted turbans, mendicant priests from Egypt howling for Osiris, Greek adventurers eager to coin their national cunning into Roman gold; representations of the avarice and ambition, the fraud and lust, the superstition and intelligence of the imperial world.

“Through the dust and tumult of that busy throng the small troop of soldiers threaded their way silently under the bright sky of an Italian midsummer. They were marching, though they

knew it not, in a procession more truly triumphal than any they had ever followed in the train of general or emperor along the sacred way. Their prisoner, now at last and forever delivered from his captivity, rejoiced to follow his Lord without the gate. The place of execution was not far distant, and there the sword of the headsman ended his long course of suffering and released that heroic soul from that feeble body. Weeping friends took up his corpse and carried it for burial to those subterranean labyrinths where, through many ages of oppression, the persecuted church found refuge for the living and sepulchers for the dead.

“Thus died the apostle, the prophet and the martyr, bequeathing to the church in her government and her discipline the legacy of his apostolic labors, leaving his prophetic words to be her living oracle, pouring forth his blood to be the seed of a thousand martyrdoms. Thenceforth among the glorious company of the apostles, among the goodly fellowship of the prophets, among the noble army of martyrs his name has stood pre-eminent. And wheresoever the Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge God, there Paul of Tarsus is revered as the great

teacher of a universal redemption and a catholic religion—the herald of glad tidings to all mankind.”

VIII.

BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY FROM ABRAHAM TO CHRIST.

THE main intent and purpose of the Bible is evidently to be a guide to moral truth and life. But I turn aside from that prime object to consider a collateral affair, to wit, the historic truth of the Scriptures. It is said, and truly said, that religious truth is religious truth no matter what its setting may be in history or in literature. The Sermon on the Mount, it is said, would save men, if its principles were followed, no matter where that sermon might be found—whether in “Robinson Crusoe,” “Thirty Thousand Leagues under the Sea,” or in the “Moon Hoax.”

Truly enough moral truth is moral truth and it makes its appeal to the moral sense on its own merits, irrespective of questions of origin. No matter where it came from, granted it be moral truth, we are under obligation to adjust ourselves, our thought and our conduct, to its precepts and spirit. But after all, we are creatures

of association. The activity of mind runs in grooves cut for it by association. One thing suggests another, even in some widely separated department, if the two things in use have been connected together.

The moral truth of the Scripture has always been associated by us with a certain course of history. The moral truth and the history have been inseparably blended. Utter a Scripture moral truth and you call up its primitive historic setting. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams," calls up the history of Samuel, the seer. The recitation of certain historic events has always sprung upon our thoughts certain moral truths therewith connected. But we are invited to try the experiment of separating these two departments; we are asked to abstract the moral truth from the Scriptures, confine our attention to that and let the historic setting go. We are told that that history is valueless—even that it is not trustworthy and we had better set it aside.

For us it will be a new experiment to try to hold attention to moral truth when we give up the history with which it has been associated. Theoretically the abstraction of the moral truth

can be made, but practically will it? When men have lost confidence in the history of the Bible, will they for a long time pay reverence to its moral truth? If, when you speak of the Bible, the first suggestion to a mind is that it is a great aggregation of historic falsehoods, will that mind easily right about face from that suggestion to a reverent attitude to its moral truth? The same fountain does not send forth bitter water and sweet in that way.

Mind will not on the average work in that way. When Biblical history becomes an old wives' fable, the Sermon on the Mount will become an old wives' fable, whatever remnants of conscience may be living to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Bible does not teach science, that is true. It may be said that the Bible does not teach history. But history does lie so plainly on its face—history is so inwoven, warp and woof, into its very structure that you may say, if you cannot find a reliable line of history set forth in it, then it is in larger part a very hollow, false affair.

We need, then, to do some very plain work with this historic aspect of the Scriptures. We cannot here and now make an argument to sus-

tain the historic truth of the Scriptures, for this comment is intended to apply to all the Scriptural history from Christ back to Abraham. I certainly could not prove up that line in one discourse. The most I can do is to give an opinion, to express a personal conviction, to utter a judgment, the result of what study has brought me up to this date.

If I say a thing is thus and so, you will understand that so the case has been made up to my mind. I have no conclusions of judgment that sit more firmly in my mind than these I shall give respecting the trustworthiness of Scripture history.

From Christ back to Abraham I think we have a thoroughly reliable biographical history. I prefer to call this portion of Biblical history biographical, because it stands in contrast with a history which lies behind the period under view, and because it deals with the fortunes of individual men, and because inherently it is biographical as distinguished from race or national history. The history runs over a large section of the fortunes of the people, to be sure, but all along the eye is made to rest on prominent characters, and where they fail the history fades in respect to definiteness of outline.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob come before you as individual men. The stream of tribal history sinks from view till Moses and Aaron appear. The heroic age has its leaders in Joshua, Jephthah, Gideon, Samson. Prophecy you do not see as a movement, but you do see Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel.

The history of the kingdoms is a history of their kings. David, Solomon, the Jeroboams, Ahab, Hezekiah, and the poor miserable wretches Jehoiakin and Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, whom one after another Nebuchadnezzar carried off in chains to Babylon, were real flesh and blood men whose fortunes make up the core of the history of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

When you come to the New Testament, the gospels are certainly a biography of Christ fully as much as they are a summary of moral truths. In fact, the moral truths of the gospels are mainly Christ's moral truths. You cannot deny this historic fact any more than you can deny the absoluteness of the spiritual truth of the beatitudes. I mean, there was an individual who was called Jesus who lived, uttered his body of doctrine, went about among men as a religious

teacher, and had a wonderful career as a healer of physical, mental and moral disease. So the gospels are biographical history. The rest of the New Testament is largely biographical, pre-eminently concerned with the history and opinions of one man—Saul of Tarsus. Now, wherever this long record from Abraham to Christ goes outside the race limit immediately in its purview, it is there eminently biographical. You touch a real historic character when you come across Hiram, king of Tyre, real men where you read of Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon, Sennacherib, Pharaoh Necho, Nebuchadnezzar.

In the New Testament you strike every Cæsar from Augustus to Nero, and strike them right as they stand in history. You do not get a broad view of the Roman government, but the most prominent personages of that government do come up as individuals before you.

Now, why do I take pains to assert such common knowledge as this? I do not know of anything more unhealthy, intellectually, than a condition of mind which either ignores or denies all this. A man is a pretty solid fact, and if a man has lived and made a demonstration on this earth it is a tremendous plunge toward or into

the abyss of ignorance to deny the fact, to resolve the man into some fiction of the imagination, to make him a mere figure-head for a mental tendency or result. It is one of the most fearful and lamentable of degradations that can befall a man or a people, to lose the historic sense. That has been done in India. To a Hindoo there is no such thing as history. He has lived so long in his imagination, so much in philosophy, that he has no reliable sense in history—in the history of his own race or of any other people's. Back beyond a generation or two everything fades out into the mist and cloud-land of fancy. Actual men disappear from his historic perspective, and the creations of the most grotesque imagination take their place. It is said we must have an oriental Christ as well as an occidental. I am anxious to find out along what lines that oriental Christ is to be drawn. If the orientalizing is to bring out to us a more vivid sense of Christ's personality and habits of life, better information of the manners of his time; if it is to give us higher, purer, more refined conceptions of him resting on sustaining fact, then speed the process of orientalization. We have much to learn along these lines. But

if the orientalizing is to be carried out along the lines of oriental historic notions, then spare us the process and the results. If an oriental Christ is one cut away from solid history and consigned for development to the aërial realms of oriental fancy, if Christ's personality is to be sunk from sight, if the three and thirty years of that life in Judea and Galilee are to be filled with such wild whimseys as the oriental mind has grouped around Buddha, then we want nothing of orientalism. An occidental fact is at any time to be preferred to an oriental fancy, however charming that fancy may be. A Hindoo has no more sense of history than a South Sea Islander has of music. The orientals need occidentalizing as to a historic sense as much as the occidentals need orientalizing in facileness of imagination or vividness of spiritual perception. We all are members one of another. Some occidentals are completely orientalized.

We have been through with the process of orientalizing Christ, historically, in Strauss and Renan. The process consists in evolving Christ from the inner consciousness, and that, too, not the moral consciousness but an intellectual, stuffed full of preconception. If the Christ so

evolved does not agree with the history, so much the worse for the history. The evolved—the suppositious Christ must stand though all history fall. Strauss' fundamental preconception is that a certain class of asserted facts could not have happened, therefore they did not. Strauss assumed to judge of the possibilities of Divine action in the universe. That is simply to cast out history at the outset; it is to cease the attempt to find the history that has been, in order to construct it at individual option. That is orientalism in full bloom.

Of Renan's "Life of Christ," Constantine Tischendorf—a student, not an inventor of history—writes thus: "This work has nothing in common with those that loyally and honestly inquire into the facts of the case. It is written on most arbitrary principles of its own, and is nothing else but a caricature of history from beginning to end."

Of course it is a question of fact who the orientalizers are. On that issue I think good scholarship will conclude that Strauss and Renan are the romancers, that the writers of the New Testament state facts. We will take on all the orientalization of Christ that will stand

to history. Meantime all lovers of truth must try to infuse into the oriental mind an occidental reverence for a historic fact.

I am treating the long line of Biblical history which I have before me with the greatest freedom.

I will not try to protect a point of it by the ægis of inspiration. I look at the record simply as a plain statement of historic fact, and what I want to impress is, my conviction that the great sweep of this record is veritable history. I am willing to allow for corruptions in transcription, such as the incorporation of comments on the margins of old manuscripts into the text, as in the case of the three witnesses in John's first letter, and the story of the angel troubling the pool in John's Gospel. I am willing to allow for errors of transcription of numbers—some errors even of historic statement. I will allow all that fair, honest, sound criticism shall agree to. Books may have been attributed to persons not their authors, as I think is probably the case with the letter to the Hebrews—that it is not Paul's. Two prophets may have written Zechariah, and two Isaiah, and much of the so-called priest's code may be of later authorship than the

time of the Exodus. Give whatever the facts finally shall compel, and you have not disturbed in any appreciable degree the common conception of Scripture history.

We may modify our notions of many facts, but the facts themselves we shall not cast out. For instance, we may give up the idea that there was anything supernatural about Paul's reviving the young man who fell out of the window while he (Paul) was preaching.

But that there was such a man as Paul, that he had such history as the New Testament sets forth, and that he brought back to consciousness a young man who fell out of a window while he (Paul) was preaching at Troas, we have every reason to hold as we shall hold that Jamestown was settled in 1607. In fact, stop one moment on that word Troas. Somehow we think that profane history is trustworthy, while sacred has a cloud of suspicion upon it. Now whether any such person as Priam ever dwelt in Troy is a fact under suspicion. But there is no question that a young man by name of Eutychus fell out of a window in Troas.

We may pause in mental helplessness before much of the miracle related in the New Testa-

ment. There we may have to pause for all time, unable to resolve the difficulties which the facts present, but that will not lead us to deny the facts. What the resurrection was we may never know—never until we have experienced it ourselves—but that can never obliterate the fact that Jesus Christ was crucified under Pontius Pilate, that his body was placed in a tomb from which it came forth neither friend nor foe could tell how, and that from that disappearance to sense began a new moral movement among men—a resurrection of souls as deeply mysterious, as significant as any resurrection of bodies.

Because there is much there that is inexplicable we are not going to be guilty of the supreme idiocy of denying the historic facts. So with the Old Testament history, we shall have to leave much unexplained. Precisely what of miracle, if any, there was about the plagues of Egypt; what of miracle, if any, about the going forth of the Israelites, may be left in doubt.

But that Israel served in Egypt, and that the Lord brought him out thence with a mighty hand and finally established him in the land of Canaan, is no subject of doubt at all. A man who has any difficulty on such a matter would

be green enough to grin incredulity over the story of the Mayflower and the landing on Plymouth Rock.

The men who have made history a specialty do not come up with historic uncertainty over the whole line from Abraham down. Take the case of George Ebers—Egyptologist and novelist. Wherever his themes come in contact with the Biblical record, whether at a point before the Exodus or down at the date of the carrying away into captivity in Babylon, he accepts the Scripture history as valid. It furnishes him some of his reference points that give form, locality and clear coloring to his stories.

Testimony of such sort is the most powerful that scholarship can give. A man need not be quite overcome with historic doubts when George Ebers finds solid ground.

Just here it is well to get a clear idea of what is meant by the composite authorship of the Pentateuch as maintained by Robertson Smith, Kuenen, and other of the critical investigators of the text of the Old Testament. That criticism will not start an essential historic fact of the Old Testament from its base—not one. It may prove that certain ceremonial directions in the Leviti-

cal law do not date from the day or pen of Moses, but belong to later dates, down to the time of the restoration from the captivity. But this neither destroys the historic standing of Moses nor of the captivity. That the directions for certain ceremonial observances have been entered in the records along with Mosaic statutes makes nothing against the trustworthiness of the history of Moses—of the account of his great demonstration in bringing out of Egypt the people of Israel and of establishing them as rulers over the country east of the Jordan.

To illustrate: Illinois was admitted to the Union in the year 1818. It then adopted a body of statute law. But you can find section after section in the revised statutes of Illinois, which was made law within ten years, carried up and put in juxtaposition with sections of the statutes of 1818.

Suppose the later origin of these latter sections is proved, would that overthrow the fact that Illinois was received into the Union in 1818, and that it then adopted an outline of statutory law? The fact is that the higher criticism does not cast doubt on the main sweep of Biblical history. It confirms it. That criticism may be

true or it may be false, it may be partially true or false, the main drift of historic assertion in the Bible back to the time of Abraham will stand just as you have always read it, just as you and all common-sense people have understood. That criticism goes to this point mainly—whether you have in the Pentateuch the Statutes of Israel or the Revised Statutes of Israel. Suppose you go a step further and show that the history is itself a revision—or a redaction—does that militate against the verity of the history? Does Charles V. pass into the land of fancy because Prescott revised Robertson's history of Charles V.?

Some critics recently put out before the public the statement that the Old Testament was "full of old wives' fables, which would finally drop out as a tadpole loses its tail." I feel like calling for justification of such remark so far as the biographical history of the Old Testament back to the time of Abraham is concerned. In the first place, if the Old Testament were full of fables that would be no reason for their being dropped. Read *Æsop* and you will see that about the best wisdom man has is in the form of fables.

To toss the Old Testament away in contempt because it is full of fables would be a procedure of dense ignorance, would simply betray lack of ability to perceive intellectual and moral truth in one of its most apprehensible and portable forms. The fable of the Sun, the Wind and the Traveler is one that we do not want to dispense with quite yet; nor that of the Oak and the Reed; nor even that of the Fox and the Grapes. If you find a fable do not hasten to throw it away, but inspect it carefully, for you will find the richest of human wisdom written in it. But as matter of fact the only fable I know of in the range of Biblical history before us is Jotham's very beautiful and significant tale in the ninth chapter of Judges, about the trees going forth to appoint a king, and passing by the vine and the olive to anoint the bramble. Something that may have application in American politics. That is the only fable that I remember in this long line of history we have before us. That something which we have regarded as history may turn out to be some other species of writing is no reason why we should lose faith in the trustworthiness of Old Testament history—no reason why we should set aside as an old wives' fable

the document we formerly considered as historical.

For instance, time has been when the historic verity of the transactions narrated in the book of Job would have been stoutly insisted upon.

But Job has not become a subject of sport by being regarded as pure drama. Better study that drama instead of "shedding it as a tadpole does its tail." Better study the historic allusions that mark the time and place of its composition. We shall find that they will bring out something which we shall want to hold as history. There is another book about which mind is in a transitory state—the book of Jonah. What if the whole book is drama or epos as much as Job? Our misunderstanding of a book is no reason for casting it away. The book of Jonah is still one of the most exquisite analyses of the working of the human mind under a sense of duty, at the same time wrestling with its own counter temptations, with its passions, its fitful moods. Make a fable of the book of Jonah if you please, and then you had better attend to its moral. It is no objection to Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* that its characters are so lifelike that you think them almost veritable living beings.

It ought to be no objection to Jonah that it has the same vivid excellence you praise in Bunyan. But Jonah is true in its historic allusions to the dim old time in which it appeared. Before Rome was, here was Tarshish and there was far Nineveh. In that morning twilight of history ships went from Joppa to Tarshish, and Nineveh was the seat of empire in the east.

If a man is obliged to alter his own notions of the character of writings, that ought not to degrade the writings.

Let them be judged by their original intent. Instead of the flirt of conceit when a man changes his views of ancient writings, let him clothe himself with the garments of humiliation for his former misconceptions of them.

It is not necessary to bar the actuality of the personal fortunes of Job or Jonah. On the doctrine of probabilities almost anything may once happen, and nobody is in position to deny the possibility of the occurrences set forth in each. Before it happened nobody would have given anything for the chances of the life of the man through whose head a crowbar, or tamping iron, "three feet and seven inches in length and one and one-fourth inch in diameter" was driven by

a discharge of powder while he was blasting rocks. The iron entered beneath the jaw and came out through the top of the head, "covered with blood and brains." Yet this man lived twelve and a half years after this event, with no essential "impairment" of his functions, physical or mental. No man is in condition to say that the possibilities of life, under suspended animation, were drawn on more heavily in Jonah's case than they were in the case of this man with this blunt iron instrument crashing through his brains. The Jonah story may be true without any miracle in it other than the miracle which abides in all extraordinary transactions in nature.

I have turned aside to discuss these collateral cases, but they do not belong to the grain of the history before us. Job and Jonah are episodic in nature—by-plays—they are not invertebrated in the Biblical history. Nothing depends upon them, nothing grows out of them. They are but rills, or mere eddies if you please, in the strong historic stream that flows from Abraham to Christ. I also want to save the point of error in some chronicle in this history here and there. Some error of some minor historic importance may have been put originally in the text or may

have crept in, in the course of transcription of manuscripts. Give what may be necessary to square with the facts in all such cases—that will not break the line or cast doubt on its main drift.

There is one very popular error just now against which young people should be on their guard. The tendency in certain quarters is to resolve all ancient history into sun myths. Now, that there are such things as sun myths is true enough. The death and resurrection of Osiris is an unquestionable sun myth. Osiris going down to death, going down to the under world, is the setting of the sun; the resurrection of Osiris is the sun rising. So there are sun myths setting forth the contests of the sun and the elements, the defeats and successes of the sun as witnessed in the changes of the seasons.

With some people it is only necessary for one idea to get lodged in the mind, and forthwith by it they have a solvent for every difficulty. Sin, sickness and the hues of a sunset sky with many are all owing to electricity. Now there are certain people of the much speaking and scribbling kind who happen to have heard of a sun myth, and they apply it to all Old Testament his-

tory. The story of Abraham is a sun myth. The story of Samson is a sun myth. One is weak in the historic sense who cannot discern the difference between fact and fancy better than that. The loosest kind of addle-headedness is that which lets facts slip away in a general swash of idealization. If Abraham was a sun myth, then General Washington was. Washington had his advances and retreats, just as the sun does in the seasons. Valley Forge represents the sun in winter, and Yorktown a July sun victorious over frost and snow, or the ripe sun of autumn "bringing in the sheaves." As for Samson, there is no more reason for denying his historic character than there is for denying the historic standing of Milo of Crotona or of Doctor Winship of Boston. That Samson capered up and down the hills of Palestine and cut up grim pranks on the Philistines is doubtless fact. When you make Samson a sun myth you may turn over to the same sort of literature Miles Standish and Daniel Boone.

Embellishment may have crept into the story of Samson here and there; perhaps it was not forty foxes that he caught—perhaps only thirty-seven, maybe only one—we will not haggle for

a fox or two, if any one can show corruption of numbers; we may have read his songs, or songs about him, into prose; but you cannot work out of history this strong man and grim joker who hewed out a path for monotheism with the jawbone of an ass.

There never was a more realistic people on the face of the earth than the descendants of Abraham. Here they are, and they have had an uninterrupted national history as long as any other race of people existing on the earth. They have always had profound reverence for facts. They have always been hard-headed enough to know the real from the ideal. You cannot impose upon a Jew to-day a bogus coin. The old historians of Israel seem to have tried the ring of facts as well as the modern Jew trader the ring of metal. As a consequence you have a long and a reliable reach backward over time in Jewish biographical history.

One further word. The term tradition is in ill repute; we ought to keep distinct two meanings in that term. Tradition is a poor foundation for morals. That is to say, we ought not to adopt a course of moral action merely because it is traditional—because our ancestors

have so thought and acted. "You have made the word of God void through your traditions," covers the ground of this meaning.

But tradition on historic ground ought to have an acceptable sense. It is or may be there equivalent to history—what is handed down to us from former generations. There is no history covering so great extent of time so valuable as the tradition of Israel in our Scripture.

NOTE I.

The Pentateuchal question is now in the field with its marked tendency to the disintegration of Moses and of all his works. It is premature for one to predict what will be the exact or even proximate result of this inquisition. The cases may not be quite parallel, to be sure, but one cannot help remembering what has been the result of the attempt at destructive criticism of the New Testament. The end has been a plain non-suit of the disintegrators. Just now new items of testimony are coming in on that elder question, and they all bear heavily in the direction of the justice of the judgment that had been rendered. In the Johannean controversy the "theosophist of the second century" has been relegated

to the cloud-land of the fancy of his creators. John holds the field with confirmed title much as tradition gave him to us.

The so-called higher criticism will yet have to settle accounts with the archæologist. The indications of the day are that the spade of the objectivist will triumph over the pen of the subjectivist.

After all allowances are made as hereinbefore set forth, we shall probably get Moses pretty much as we have him—the founder of the Hebrew nation, the moral, civil and criminal legislator for a people. It will probably be found that he was the author of a very much larger section of the religious ceremonial law than even conservative higher critics allow. Primitive peoples are nothing if not elaborate in their religious rituals. Moses would have been a blunderer if he had left Israel without ornate ceremonies for his religion.

NOTE II.

Goldwin Smith subscribes to the reduction of Abraham to a myth. If there is anything that would naturally be regarded as a myth in the history of Abraham, it is the story of the war

between the kings of the vale of Siddim and of the neighboring regions on the one hand, and on the other those of the far east. But Chedor-laomer and Tidal king of nations appear to be verified by the spade. After that it seems simple to balk at the historicity of Abraham.

IX.

HISTORY, TRIBAL AND SYNTHETIC.

WE have treated of the Biographical History of the Bible from Christ back to Abraham.

We will now look at an earlier history which the Bible puts before us, which I think may well be termed—History, Tribal and Synthetic. The significance and appropriateness of the title I have chosen will readily be seen. We are to deal less with individual men, more with tribes, peoples and races. Our attention is drawn not to leading personages in a nation, but to groups of peoples—to nations and tongues.

Before engaging in the discussion of the main topic I wish to utter a word on a related matter.

In order to detract from the merits of the Bible we are told very frequently that we have our sacred books and that other nations have their sacred books, and it is very likely said that the books of other nations are as good for them, and perhaps might be for us, as the books

to which we give so much reverence. I can never traverse that objection to the Bible, or depreciation of it, without stopping to say, our sacred books are not ours. We never have had anything that we called sacred books, and if we did have, we gave them up long ago for the sacred books of a people and a race very widely separated from ourselves. Our ancestors took up these books—borrowed these books, because they seemed to them the best books that had ever been brought to their notice. Yet they came from far to us as respects space, time and race. So that in lauding the Bible we are not praising our own books. We are speaking of books which have found us rather than we them. Our missionaries will do well to get possession of this idea, so that in going among non-Christian peoples they could be divested utterly of the suspicion that they were recommending their own wares. If a man goes among the heathen the first thing he wants to do is to impress upon them that the Bible that he brings is something he has found, that neither he nor his people had anything to do with the composition of a line of it, but that he and his people had found this treasure, which had been

given them by another people, so good that they wanted to put it in the hands of all peoples on the face of the earth. There is not as clear-cut conception as there ought to be that the Bible is not our book save by adoption.

“God shall enlarge Japheth and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.” The children of Japheth are the rulers of the world, yet every soul of them, save the Brahmin of India, from farthest Caspian to “where rolls the Oregon,” has adopted a Semitic religion.

The induction from history is that the process is simply delayed in the case of the Brahmin.

There is something weird in the anticipatory conception, in an early age of human history, of a process on which we look as accomplished fact.

But this is not the main thought I have here. I cannot stop here to compare the Scriptures with the writings called sacred or otherwise of other peoples in other respects. But what I do wish to say is, that sacred books other than the Bible have no historic character or will not bear examination in the forum of history. They do not carry history. The Vedas of the Hindoos are poetry and philosophy. The writings of

Confucius were mostly of a political character. You will not find the sacred books of any of the heathen peoples that will give a course of history, of biographical cast like that in the Bible from Christ back to Abraham. Then you will not find one of them that will give you a sweep over national histories like that to which your attention is called to-day. If such work is attempted by these other sacred books, the attempt will not stand a moment's examination. Whoever is deceived by the attempt, so far as history is concerned, to muddle minds by heaving the Bible into a heap with the sacred books of the heathen nations, is not wise. If the Bible is not distinguished from all these other sacred books by its monotheism and morality, it is by the trustworthiness of its historic record. Just as far back as research has been able to push inquisition, so far has the Bible history been found reliable.

We want now to get an outline view of the tribe and race histories of men as they are set forth in the book of Genesis. And now bear in mind where we are. We have pushed reliable biographical history back to the eleventh chapter of Genesis. Historic troubles of any essen-

tial importance which we may have, will lie before that point and date.

We have found marked men dotting the whole line under view—men who cannot be puffed out of the realm of fact into sun myth or the smoke evolved from anybody's inner consciousness.

And now a word as to disposition, as to attitude of mind respecting the record that lies before us. An old chronicle, yet covering time of very much later date than the time we consider, says of the matters treated in it, "These are ancient things." We approach something very ancient. The events of which the record treats lie back in the dimness and obscurity of early human history. The record itself must be very old—so old that we have no tradition who wrote it. If Moses had anything to do with it he could have been only a late editor. Some similar traditions on other historic lines can be traced back to a pre-Hebrew period. The type of mind—of race, methods of thinking out from which the record came was very different from our own. It would conceive and state facts in a very different way from that we should employ—especially facts of synthetic order such as would set forth type experiences or the origin,

the fates and fortunes of races and of groups in races. The special may stand for the general—a name for a nation. Now we need to be doubly on our guard as to our own mental moods towards a record, behind which lies such a state of facts. It is easy enough when we come to something obscure—something that taxes our knowledge, that tries our powers both of analysis and of synthesis—it is easy enough to cry out, “An old wives’ fable,” and toss the record away. But in so doing we should in all probability only be exposing ourselves to the contempt of the studious and the thoughtful. If we should find a fable here in this old record we would reverently pause upon it to detect, if we could, the sort of moral and philosophical thought the men of those ancient times had before their minds, and embodied in fable. That were worth our while, were it not, to look in upon the problems of moral and philosophical thought upon which the sages of primal times were engaged?

We will reverently treat a fable. But we shall find little or nothing of that in the section of the record we are treating; for a fable is not often the medium of historic truth; it is rather

a mode of conveyance of that which is philosophical or ethical. We may find the myth or the story which in concrete form conveys to us tribal or race history. Here let us be reverent as becometh students seeking to trace the path of any single ray of light that might guide us back into primitive times. There are difficulties connected with the interpretation of this old record. But I am sure that scholarship is showing that our difficulties spring from our ignorance, not that this record is inaccurate or of trifling character.

Now let us take a station where we can see at once what is the main character of the section of the record we have in view. In the eleventh chapter of Genesis you strike Abraham. Scripture history this side of him is predominantly biographical, prior to him synthetic, generic, tribal, national.

Take the tenth chapter of Genesis, for example. Pass to the enumeration of the sons of Ham. You find Mizraim given as a son of Ham. But Mizraim is a plural and stood for both Egypts, upper and lower. That you are dealing under that term with tribes or nations is seen plainly enough when you read lower down—

“And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, and Pathrusim, and Casluhim (out of whom came Philistim), and Caphtorim”—for those terms are all plurals (“im” is a Hebrew plural), the designations of peoples sprung from Egyptian stock.

Take another case; take the genealogical history of Canaan, another son of Ham. “And Canaan begat Sidon his first-born, and Heth, and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgassite, and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.” Then take the concluding comment, which is applied as a common formula to the history of the descendants of Japheth and Shem as well as Ham—“These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations,”—and you have something before you which teaches that you are dealing with history of a very general character.

We are no doubt in this tenth chapter of Genesis dealing with tribal designations, as we are when in Cæsar we read of the Suevi, Ædui, Belgæ, Segusiani, Aquitani, Sequani, Helvetii. Indeed, it may be maintained with much plausi-

bility, to use no stronger term, that in all the names, even to Shem, Ham and Japheth, we are dealing with tribe or race names rather than with those of individuals. Take such a case as that "Canaan begat Sidon his first-born." Now Sidon, as we know, was the name of a Phœnician city, and the probability is that the intent of the author of the record was to say that Sidon was the first offshoot of the Canaan stock, as the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Hivite were subsequent tribal dispersions. The difficulties on this supposition are not greater than will occur in an attempt to construe any of these names as limited in application to an individual. The tribe name may well have been derived from that of an individual. But even to Shem, Ham and Japheth we have here probably national or race designations. The difficulty in this old record is to tell when you are dealing with an individual or with a race or tribe name. Sometimes you seem to be dealing with one and the next instant it slides into the other. But what else could you expect with "ancient things?"

You can illustrate from the Bible itself.

When Israel is mentioned you will have to study the context to determine whether Jacob

the individual, or the thousands upon thousands of his descendants in their national capacity are signified. This repeated reference to families, tongues, countries and nations compels the conclusion that race problems are what are particularly in view. We need not make a stumbling block out of the statement that Sidon was the first-born of Canaan, any more than we need to put one in the way when you read in Hosea, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt."

The synthetic method here employed may be illustrated in this way on our own race line: And Japheth or Aryan begat Hindoo and Teuton and Slav, and Greek, and Roman, and Kelt. And Kelt begat Gaul and Briton, and Irish, and Welsh, and Gael. And Teuton begat German and Dutch and English. These are the sons of Aryan after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, in their nations.

The wonderful thing about this tenth chapter is its accuracy. Mr. Gladstone says that this chapter is the most valuable summary of ethnography known to man.

Read Cæsar's Commentaries and you are struck with the remarkable familiarity they ex-

hibit with the location and affinities of the tribes in Germany and Gaul, with whom Cæsar came in contact or respecting whom he gathered information.

You call that history, and you cause your children to read Cæsar as an introduction to the Latin language and as a foundation of modern west-European history. You bring no railing accusation against Cæsar as superstitious—easily imposed on—as the dupe of the story-telling propensity of a credulous age and of barbarous tribes. But now turn back to the tenth chapter of Genesis and you find Cæsar's work done, one cannot say how many centuries before his time, from a Mesopotamian center of outlook, as his from one in Germany and Gaul—done as minutely and as accurately in its minuteness as his work was done. There is one element in which the old historian excels Cæsar, and it is an element of supreme import. Cæsar never attempted to solve the ultimate race problem of the peoples of whom he treated, and the author of Genesis X. did. The latter, in treating of his tribes, has indicated their kinship and traced out their origin. He has attempted to refer to an ultimate unity all the races of men

with which one would come in contact as he went out from a Mesopotamian center to the four quarters of the compass. An attempt one would think sufficiently ambitious to begin with—certainly of immense importance, if it were successful, to end with. Well, the wonderful thing is that the attempt well stands the rack of modern investigation. It may safely be said that from the ancient age in which this race chronicle in Genesis was written to a time within the memory of men still living, it was not possible for a child of Japheth to tell whether it was correct or not. But now the door to verification is flung wide open, and entrance through the door has brought out such results as you have heard embodied in the opinion of Mr. Gladstone. Philology is a late born science. That the history of men, of their race relations, can be shown by the study of their language is an achievement, we may say, of the scholarship of this century. At any rate, wide confidence in the trustworthy result of philological investigation is a growth in this century. But now philology with its keen detective apparatus turns back upon the race problems set forth in the tenth chapter of Genesis and declares that they were in the main correctly solved.

This curious fact lies on the face of that chapter also. Our late science was an old science. It is expressly said that the classification in Genesis was on philological grounds—that the tribes were assigned relationship from philological considerations. Language was made the base of classification. Now look at the magnitude of that problem. When the tenth chapter of Genesis was written the varieties of Semitic and Aryan stocks were spread abroad on the face of the earth—not as widely as now, to be sure, but yet on those base positions from which their subsequent movements can be traced—yet this whole complex position is sifted into proper elements and then a correct synthesis made of them. The sons of Japheth, or peoples, we should say, of Indo-European origin, are grouped together by their tongues, in their nations, and the work seems to be correctly done. Consider that they had not only built up different nations but different “tongues.” The old Aryan tongue had, as our modern scientists would say, differentiated into several distinct stocks of language.

The sons of Japheth are located just where they should be, as inhabitants of the “Isles.” They stand at the entrance of the ways leading

from Europe into Asia. The quite recent theory that the original home of the Aryan was in Europe rather than in Asia, receives confirmation rather than contradiction from the location of the Japhethan tribes set forth in this tenth chapter of Genesis. There is in it, too, a glance over on the eastern Aryan in "Madai" (Medes), disclosing a knowledge at some early day of linguistic relations which the philological science of this century adopts as true. The Aryan is caught in this chapter on his march to the east and south in Asia, or some laggard band on that trail. A fact most worthy of attention.

The same work of grouping together the Semite nations by their tongues is done also. And there appears to be no confusion in this complex problem. Modern investigation confirms the correctness of this work.

We may well stand in awe before the majesty of the knowledge set forth in the tenth chapter of Genesis! What old Cæsar was it that had skirmished round over the then known world from the Tigris valley on the east to the Greek Isles on the west, that had basked in the torrid heats of upper Egypt and frozen in the snows of the Caucasus? What inquisitive old Herodotus

was it that had gone over all the ground, learned languages and dialects and referred the peoples speaking them to their proper origins—analyzed, combined and reduced the whole problem to a few simple elements that stand indestructible as the pyramids? You are called upon to do two things, to reverence the solid scientific character of the ancient scholarship behind this record, and to reverence the trustworthiness of ancient tradition.

This chapter does not resolve the whole human situation. If it did, why is it the tenth and not the second chapter of Genesis? There is a wider reach to the human race than that covered by this chapter. That problem is deep, dark and wide. Foundation is laid for it in the chapters preceding this. Archæology and geology combined are on the road to do for the human history set forth in those previous chapters just what philology has done for this.

Philologically, certainly Ham is a puzzle. On what principle peoples are grouped together as children of Ham is not clear. Why the Egyptians should be classed with the Phœnicians and the Canaanites is not only not apparent, but on its face presents a difficulty which seems

irresolvable. The Egyptians did not speak a Semitic language and the Phœnicians and the Canaanites did. The latter on linguistic grounds should be classed with the children of Shem. But a key to a solution of this philological difficulty may be found from extra Biblical sources. There may be a history behind the history disclosed in the Bible. Indeed, there are hints in the Bible of such history not by it elaborated.

Briefly, Ham seems originally to have been Turanian and then to have included all the Semitic hybrids that came out of the successive immigrations into lands inhabited by Turanian peoples.

Abraham seems not to have been a lone pioneer to the land of Canaan, but to have followed in the wake of an overflow of his race-kindred sufficient to have impressed its tongue on an original Turanian stratum before he arrived in the country. This emigration had force enough to impress its tongue, but not enough to impress its religion on the primitive people. You can find illustrations of such result in mixing populations, or of something akin, throughout history. Anglo-Saxon customs and laws survive beneath the imposition of the Latinized French tongue

of the Norman. A reason why such insistence is placed on the non-confusion of Israel with the surrounding nations may be that there was a bad example before their own eyes of the degradation in that way of their own kith and kin.

Religion would seem to have had some influence over this classification in the tenth chapter of Genesis. Though the tongue might be Semitic, the prevailing blood and custom of Phœnicia and Canaan was not, and so all its inhabitants were swept into an "omnium gatherum" under Ham, as a sort of waste-basket for all the nations not Semitic or Japhethan.

To a dweller in Mesopotamia the phenomenon of a hybrid people, the result of a union of sons of Japheth with Turanians, would not be a prominent matter, and so no notice is taken of such fact; and yet we know that there was such union in Phrygia. The western blood finally became dominant in Phrygia, as the Semitic in Israel in Canaan. But in neither case was the victory clear. Influences from the underlying Turanian stratum persisted till very late dates in both lands. Superstition, dark and forbidding, was a common characteristic of this Turanian or Hamitic influence.

We regard the Turk in Asia Minor and Syria as an interloper, but he is only there coming to his own. His kin, so archæology says, were first on the ground. The Turkish Empire, as it lies down over western Asia, covers ground over portions of which you can pick out race dominance in something like the following order:

Turanian—Primal.

Aryan—Western.

Turanian—Hittite.

Aryan—Cimmerian.

Semite—Assyrian.

Aryan—Greek.

Aryan—Eastern, Persian.

Aryan—Greek.

Aryan—Roman.

Semite—Saracen.

Turanian—Turk.

The elements out of which such a history could be divided were under the vision of this ancient ethnologist, and its components indicated.

In the old record the inferiority of Canaan or Ham or the Turanian to the Semite and the Japhethan is predicted. Canaan is to be a serv-

ant of both Shem and Japheth. Well, that is history. On the old common ground in the east the Semite forged ahead to supremacy. The sons of Japheth in like manner became dominant over the primitive stocks whenever they came in contact with them. The present exception to this law seems to be the rule of the Turk in Asia Minor. But it is an existing faith that the days of the exception are numbered. The exception is more apparent than real, for the Turk has been mothered for centuries from slaves bought from Semite or Japhethan stock.

But if Ham is a puzzle we shall find more perplexity as we go further back. We have a record of a peopling of the earth in a time long anterior to that of Noah. It does not look credible that so much pains would be taken to preserve a history of individuals and clans, all of whom and all of whose progeny was swept from the earth in order to make an entire new beginning with Noah. On the face of the matter it would seem improbable that such particulars could have survived through the Noachian conditions. The uselessness of such particulars is apparent, and the useless ought not to survive here any more than elsewhere. There is light on all this per-

plexity in one theory of the nature and purpose of this ancient record, or of these ancient documents, if one prefers the compilation hypothesis of origin.

The theory may be briefly stated to be this: *descent in time from the general to the particular*. If one will work by that principle as he reads this record from its beginning to Abraham, he will find much will become luminous which is otherwise dark. We begin with the history of man generic. He goes out from some primal home and settles on all the face of the earth. We leave this broad view to come down to the contemplation of the particular tribes raying out from, or located around a Mesopotamian center. Then we dismiss all these to have our attention held to one man who comes from Semitic stock, and to the fortunes of his progeny. On this view we may assume the history of Noah and his family to be only a local particularization in the general field. Its horizon scarcely extended beyond the Tigris on the east, the Caucasus on the north, and Arabia and the Nile valley on the south.

In support of this method of explanation is the known fact that the children of Japheth and

of Shem, wherever they went, found the ground occupied before them. The Aryans and the Semites in their migrations found earlier peoples emigrants, like themselves, from somewhere. This is further supported by the fact that the enumeration of peoples, nations and tribes does not include the whole family as it was known to exist, certainly as early as the days of Abraham.

The Negro, the Chinese and his related Mongol are not known in the tenth chapter of Genesis. They are not therein provided for, except as offshoots from them come into the Mesopotamian field of view and furnish an underlying stratum of population which in that field is swept into the family of Ham. There is nothing for it but to hold that the tenth chapter of Genesis is not exhaustive of the human problem. It is limited in its scope. It is correct inside its limitations, certainly, so far as Semite and Aryan are concerned. But it cannot be stretched to cover humanity. On this ground the history antecedent takes on usefulness and purpose. We get out of that, just what archæology is showing us to be the fact, a source of origin for all the Turanian or allophylian races which we find in-

habit or have inhabited the earth. This old record itself then throws their beginning back of the origin of the Semitic and Aryan races. We need the chapters anteceding the tenth to account for known facts. They lay a foundation for the origin of races known to be omitted from that chapter. They furnish a ground of support for the hypothesis toward which the sciences are tending, that the Semitic and Aryan races are derivatives, "sports" from some older stock.

Minor questions of criticism will find adjustment as they may, this more important matter finding settlement.

We have found in the tenth chapter individual names to cover tribe life; why may not this mode of treatment well have been followed in the preceding chapters in what looks like a list of patriarchs of extreme longevity? As conservative a scholar as Professor Green of Princeton adopts this view. The formula of interpretation is: such a dynasty lasted so many hundred years, when such a man appeared.

This is simply to follow the light afforded by the old historians in their treatment of the dynasties of Egypt.

We cannot well spare even a difficulty from this old record. We may be sure there is something behind it which we cannot afford to lose. If we take Adam as a synthesis or as giving a typical experience, questions like "Where did Cain get his wife, or with whom did he build a city?" will be answered by saying, he got his wife and built a city as every one else has, from the people round about him. Again, the very difficulties of the old record are full of suggestions which we cannot well spare.

The compilation theory of the origin of the chapters in Genesis, introductory to the biographical history, certainly receives confirmation from the setting and character of the story, in the eleventh chapter, of the building of the tower of Babel and of the confusion of tongues. That story seems an insertion not necessarily connected with what goes before or what follows. It is such sort of story as would be likely to come into existence as a new people in their migrations stumbled upon some old abandoned ruin testifying to the existence there of a prior population. Conquering Semites might have received it from subjugated Turanians.

The trouble in the case is the *locus in quo* of

place and time. But the truth of the story is not improbable. Man is a builder, and a builder under the influence of strange notions. It is not quite so easy to tell what primitive men would do, nor by what motives they would be influenced. Perhaps you can narrow the matter down by saying you cannot tell what motives might run in the head of one man who happened to be a ruler over the rude peoples of early days. There is no reason why he should not try to build an Eiffel Tower as well as a Frenchman. Use and wont are powerful with barbarians. Because one generation worked on a tower would have been a sufficient reason for the next to continue the work. The philosophy beneath this story is certainly good enough to make it probable fact. Confusion of tongues would tend to dispersion and dispersion would tend to confusion of tongues. Either as cause would produce the other, and the effect would double back and reproduce the cause. The philologists have invented no better theory of the origin of language than this Babel story. In fact philology has no other theory than that embodied in this story. Necessity compels men to depart out of the countries to which they gravitate under the gregari-

ous propensity where they would speak one language.

As they go forth they meet with different experiences, and out of such variety of experience must come variety of language. The experience of men in valleys will call for different words from that of men in mountain countries. Different horizons will provoke different thoughts and consequent different expressions, and here you have the beginnings of dialects and languages. The phenomena of the growth of provincialisms upon which we ourselves can look is a reflection of a process which must have worked to rapid results and results of great magnitude with primitive migrating man. The story of the confusion of tongues, then, is not a wild invention of the fancy of untutored man; it is a synthesis which holds within itself a credible mode of origin of every dialect of every language spoken by man.

The fact of the diversification of the tongues of all stocks, Turanian, Semitic, Aryan, is a fact not to be disputed, and the further fact that that variance has come, in the main, from dispersion is equally indisputable. The Babel story may have had only a local application in its incep-

tion. But even so, it is a type story that can be laid down over universal human experience.

Even the dramatic elements of the local story might have had foundation in fact. Men might well have begun a tower on which generations spent their united force, but in which they finally ceased to have a common interest because, through their dispersion, they ceased to have upon them the influence of the unifying power of a common tongue.

The sovereign question to be kept in view in our treatment of this old record is: What did the writers thereof *mean*, what ground did they *intend to cover*, what was the *point of view* from which they drew up or compiled their history, what, if any, were the limitations incident to their work? The Babel story is on its face local, of limited application. We have found the location of the sons of Japheth, Ham and Shem to be true for a Mesopotamian center, but that the record is limited to an outlook from that center. It does not exhaust the problem of humanity. It falls far short of that. The chronicles in the antecedent chapters imply as much.

Now, in coming to the treatment of the flood

we have an induction from the old record itself which raises a presumption not easily to be set aside, gives it *prima facie* standing, that in that event we are dealing with an operation of nature limited and local. We all give description in universal terms of what passes beyond the bounds of our knowledge and experience. The tale of the flood is probably but a reminiscence of the fortunes of a few individuals. Even so it may be a type of human experience of very wide range, as we have found the Babel story to indicate forces operant throughout humanity.

We may say at once: Given the glacial epoch and man contemporary with any of its conditions, at the beginning, middle or at its close, and the story of Noah must come. But we shall have to give the glacial epoch, and that too not only with floods resulting from the melting of the ice, but with submergence of ice-covered and adjacent lands.

The Lebanou range was glaciated and the Jordan valley shows its raised beaches. Given that fact and what must have been the conditions at the head waters of the Tigris and Euphrates? With the hills and mountains of Armenia glaciated, and subsidences as in other cases of deep

and protracted glaciation, it is incredible that there should not have been floods in Mesopotamia.

I do not know the geology of that region, but I will risk the prediction that it is covered with till (loess) deposits from glacial flood washings. Floods came and went with the changes of climate again and again. Now, if man was contemporary with such events what is there incredible about the Noah story? Evidence of a character not easily brushed away is accumulating that man was distributed nearly all over the globe in the later periods of the glacial epoch—the time of its floods.

It would be marvelous if men could go through such an extraordinary experience and that of it there should not some tradition survive. Flood traditions have survived along a long line. The traditions simply fit the facts. No matter about particulars, any one of them encloses the unquestionable truth that in its early history the race of man encountered extraordinary floods.

The ark has had its ridicule. But man is a builder according to necessity or dominant idea. With tides creeping inland under subsidences toward a glacier front, man would be likely to

do something extraordinary. The ark is not as incredible a structure as the pyramids, not more incredible than the Swiss lake dwellings.

If "forty centuries" had not "looked down" from the pyramids before the very eye of history, we should say, if the tale of their construction came to us for the first time now, that it might pass as a story of fairy land but it could not find credence on this solid earth. Mankind is too matter of fact to put so much effort on a chimera. Thoreau is not far from right when he says: "The most wonderful thing about the pyramids is, that so many people could be found who would work for an ambitious booby whom it would have been better to drown in the Nile and then give his body to the dogs." It is incredible that one man could have, as Herodotus says, "worked up" one hundred thousand men every three months for ten years to build a pyramid, yet the pyramid is there, and there must have been the hundreds of thousands of men "worked up" in order for it to be. Noah's ark for a fairly conceivable exigency was child's play to the pyramid of Cheops. Not only the plains of Shinar but the whole surface of the globe is dotted over with towers and mounds,

the story of whose structure has no such support in natural exigency as that of the ark of Noah. You cannot tell what men will do. The wit of man is sometimes surprisingly alert to detect impending calamity, and sometimes provides for it.

In Bret Harte's story of "The Luck of Roaring Camp," though the valley in which the camp was situated abounded in trees, a miner perceived that it had been formerly torn to pieces by floods, and predicted that they might occur again. They did occur, with terrible disaster. Had the miners been impressed with the probability of an immediate calamity and calked the bottom and the sides of their cabin, they would have probably executed Noah's problem under conditions somewhat similar to his. But Roaring Camp was not a very godly place and the floods came and carried them all away. There were doubtless many Roaring Camps in Noah's vicinity. But his righteousness and consequently his wit never forsook him. To apprehend disaster with him was to provide for it.

A good many things come together on this story and confirm it. What is this promise of God to the righteous: "No evil shall befall thee,

neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling"? It is but one aspect of the law of the survival of the fittest. Noah was righteous and was saved. The rest of the world about him was desperately wicked and went beneath the waters of the flood. You might argue that this would be so from the known operation of the laws of righteousness and sin. Righteousness teaches habits of circumspection. The wicked are always, or as a rule, improvident. The Saviour has given a touch of description which reveals the moral carelessness and heedlessness which exposed itself in open recklessness to any fate that might impend: "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came and took them all away." There are moral probabilities of great strength which you may also give in evidence. The probabilities are that under Noah's conditions in nature the man was a fool who did not build an ark, and that his folly arose, just as the Bible says, from the improvidence of his wickedness.

I should be perfectly willing to take even lower ground than this concerning the flood

story. Perhaps it is not a reminiscence, but only an inference. Even so, it would carry its body of probability with it.

We do not do justice to the science of the early days. Men were observers of nature in that day, probably closer observers than they are now, because they lived more in open nature. The native Australian is put by us very low in the scale of humanity. Yet civilization employs him as a detective of criminals in the wilds of Australia. Once on a track in the open country, he is Nemesis itself. The sight follows the displacement of a blade of grass, or the disturbed position of a grain of gravel, with the infallibility of the scent of a hound.

Sometimes sight and mind corresponded in early days. Observation is not a recent science, nor deduction therefrom a modern art. The Chaldees worked out the essential elements of astronomy. We speak of the Copernican system, but Pythagoras taught that system in the sixth century B. C. Geology is a science of the nineteenth century surely. Its main facts were observed and correct inferences drawn from them in the sixth century B. C. by Zenophanes. Man has always been a digger in the ground.

Suppose that far inland he exhumed the bones of a whale, or a human skull rolled down at his feet, he could infer in the early days as well as now. The flood story in the main as we have it would be an inevitable inference. Do not be so sure about primitive men being "childlike and bland."

Some heads were clear in the early days and wrought to just conclusions from keen observations. In the story of the flood we may have the scientific inferences of an observer of nature as sharp of sight and strong of thought as Zenophanes, Pythagoras and the old Chaldees.

One final word as to attitude of spirit in treating this old record. There is nothing about it that we can afford to drop. There is not a line of it that is not of inestimable value for scholarship if not for religion. Tales that look very incredible to ignorance may become luminous with truth to wisdom. If anything remains unsolved it will become us before it reverently to wait.

In a cave in Perigord, in Southern France, a bit of ivory was found on which was a sketch of a hairy elephant. Now, suppose the workman who unearthed it, after he had brushed the soil

from its surface, had said: "What nonsense! There is no such thing as a hairy elephant. This is simply a fancy sketch, as of a griffin or dragon, an old wives' fable, made to impose upon the imagination of children. I'll smash it here with my pick upon this stone." It takes away one's breath to think how, under the influence of such thought, one of the most precious bits of testimony to the animal life contemporary with early man might have been destroyed.

And yet we have precisely that state of feeling toward these old fossils of human history, and it plumes itself on its wisdom and calls itself criticism. A man who would treat these old records with umbrage or levity would blow up a cabinet of fossils because it contains much that is inexplicable and does not read like a book.

X.

PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY.

THE impression I desire to produce is, that in the Bible we have a trustworthy history so far as it attempts to portray the lives of individuals or to set forth the origin and movements of races. In the two discussions already had, I hope some contribution has been made to such impression. But there is a history of man and his surroundings, which lies back of anything that we have yet touched, for which I can find no better term than philosophic history; Max Mueller says, "constructive." It is a history of which we have no record and little or no tradition. If we find our way into and over it we shall have to execute the feat by the light of philosophy. I wish to carry the conviction that we have as reliable philosophical history in the Bible as we have pertaining to race or biographical. I think what lies behind that which we have already considered, i e., what in the Scriptures antedates

the record of the division of man into races, is of philosophical cast, was composed as philosophy, and is to be interpreted by philosophy. I am far from denying a basis of fact, but the facts are mere guide-posts for the reason as it, from all that is known, constructs a way of rational judgment back over the unknown.

Of course you will pass by insensible gradations from what I have termed synthetic to philosophical history. Suppose a man to be writing human history from a theistic point of view. He will give you an account of God-led men as he traces a line along the open path of history. Back of that he will show you races under divine appointment filing out from some center of common origin to take up their places on the face of the earth. If these specially described races do not cover the whole problem of humanity, that fact will be indicated. But if that makes the history of man an affair too wide and too ancient to be traced out in detail, we should expect to find some comprehensive synthesis, some philosophical summary that will give the essential features of a history whose complications bewilder—whose facts are lost. You find just such a system of philosophy in the

earlier chapters of Genesis. Going back in history as far as one can, there is man, and before him was man of whom there is no history. What were the fortunes of that primitive man? How came he here? That is one of the most entrancingly interesting of questions. This prehistoric man—who was he? Where did he come from? how did he live? what tools did he use? what were his social customs and habits? what was the range of his thought?

Every cave is searched, every burial mound opened, upon every chipped flint inquisition is made, to find some answer or some partial answer to such questions. Our newspapers and periodicals of all sorts are full of facts or speculations bearing upon the problems connected with the life of this primitive, prehistoric man. Now, the writer of Genesis knew of this supreme problem as well as the last writer in our scientific periodicals, and the writer in Genesis where fact failed put in philosophy to round out the problem to comprehension as well as could be done or as fully as necessary to suit the purposes of his composition. Let us see what are some of these philosophic conclusions. The work herein cannot be an exhaustive commentary. It

can only indicate a mode of treatment which can be applied to the various topics sprung by the record.

One of these subjects is the unity of the race. Back of the total historic problem of man stands Eden, as back of the Mesopotamian center is the ark of Noah. Out from some common center came man, as out from some catastrophe cutting off others from that center came the progenitors of the tribes and peoples with whom a Chaldean would come in contact. Is not the record evidently drawn up on such a basis? Can we to-day do any better with the problems raised? The question of inspiration I leave untouched. That element may be found in the intent and purpose of a composition intensely human, radically philosophic.

Let Adam stand for man—for man generic. If you will read the first chapters of Genesis carefully you will conclude that you are dealing with a philosophic problem rather than with the fortunes of an individual. It is philosophy and not biography that is before you. That conclusion will grow on reflection. Of course the question comes, is the philosophy trustworthy? Well, who disputes the unity of the race? The

extremest doctrine of evolution will give man as one species. That doctrine leads back straight to the position of the unity of origin of man. It conceives the various races as differentiated from a common ancestry by the different environment with which they came in contact, just as their tongues were confounded or differentiated by their differing experiences.

The doctrine of evolution inherently involves the original unity of the race. So that the last theory of science comes to the same ground upon which to rest as the first philosophy of religion. We like to get into a philosophy sometimes and see some of the elements which compel it to take the form it wears. I think we can discern one or two such formative principles operative in the case before us. Whoever had worked out the philological problem which we have found solved for us, could not have failed to carry up to the elder problem inferences to which his investigations led him in the later problem.

There was an earlier unity than the unity which settled on Noah, as that on the face of the record seems not exhaustive. Such philosophical inference I think we may say would be natural.

The unity of the race of man would follow from the religious doctrine of the unity of God. Given in thought one God and man his son, and mind will inevitably gravitate to the view of the unitary origin of man.

The moment that monotheism is planted, that moment some Paul will say: "God hath made of one all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth," and that is the philosophy of the first chapters of Genesis. We are not very soon to remove that philosophy from its base. It stands and it will stand.

But there is another problem on which philosophic judgment is passed, and it is the inner one of religion. This is it—the moral history of man, what has it been? The answer to that is the story of Paradise and "the fall." Our theology has made such havoc with that story that it is almost impossible for one, who tries resolutely to set aside what theology has taught and to read the story anew for himself, to divest himself of the profound misunderstandings which have been bred into the fiber of his mind. Then, on the other hand, destructives with malign intent have insisted on treating an allegory or parable as meant for historic fact, and an impress has been left on us from that quarter.

Would you deny the truth of the parable of the prodigal son? Neither would I the truth of the Eden story of the fall of man. Indeed, do they not substantially cover the same ground? In fact, what is the story of the fall but the story of a prodigal son? The writer of Genesis found certain moral facts in existence round about him. He found "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" growing at every man's right hand. Everybody knew that tree. No one has described it better than the heathen poet Ovid:

"I know the right, approve it too;
I know the wrong and still the wrong pursue."

The question with the writer of Genesis is, how far back can you push knowledge of that sort? and his answer is, just as far as you can push human experience. I have been tempted and I have fallen. Men about me have been tempted and fallen. Where did this experience begin? The answer is, it began with man. Now put your philosophy on the matter. Is not that a correct answer? Who is in position to dispute its correctness? If the first man did not fall, then he was superhuman and was not the first man. "Errare est humanum"—"It is human to err." The story of the Eden fall is in that

Latin proverb; for it is a truth respecting the action of the moral as well as of the intellectual nature.

Man sins as well as makes mistakes. The Eden story is a correct portraiture of the moral experience of all men for all time, true for the first man and true for the last. If you take the theory of the animal origin of man, then the first man was the one who first had the Edenic moral experience. All before that was animal, all after that was man. We hear the doctrine of the fall of man denied. It is denied in quarters where we should expect better philosophy. What is a moral fall? A good statement of it is just exactly that which we have quoted from Ovid:

“To know the right, approve it too;
To know the wrong and still the wrong pursue.”

So to know and so to do is to eat forbidden fruit—to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Of that fruit the first man ate. Of that fruit we all have eaten. To eat it banished us from Eden; why should it not have had the same effect with primitive man? Every man has the means of verification of that Eden story within himself. That man has been

continually rising—continually progressing, even morally, furnishes no reason why we should deny that man fell and that man is fallen. The two truths may exist together—have existed together—do exist together.

However rudimentary man might have been at first in his moral capacity, he was not true to that rudimentary moral nature.

And however clear in moral perception man may have become, he has not been true to the clearness of his perception. That makes a fall along the whole line. Conduct has fallen below moral knowledge. That is undeniable. I should not expect a man to find a great following who should deny it. Because theology has made a botch in its treatment of this matter, making dark and incomprehensible what is luminous, deducing effects and conditions which never had being, that is no reason why the essential fact of the fall of man should be denied. Correct the theology, but do not blur the fact—a fact standing in universal consciousness. It is utterly untrue that

“In Adam’s fall,
We sinned all.”

But it is true that Adam sinned and that

we have all sinned "after the similitude of Adam's transgression." It is not true that there is any such thing as original sin in the theologic sense of a sin committed by Adam for which we are guilty, or the guilt of which is imputed to us. But it is true that there is no sin which is not original in the sense pointed out by Coleridge—there is no sin which is not original with the individual sinner—as original as Adam's sin. It is not true that there is any corruption in us derived from Adam's sin for which we are under condemnation. It is true that there are tendencies to sin which we have derived from the whole line of our ancestry back to Adam.

But the correct moral estimate of these tendencies is not that they are guilt, but that they are temptations only, that no guilt attaches till we have chosen to follow the temptation. The sin of all mankind may have wrought depravity in every nature derived from human stock. But there is no guilt till the depravity is assented to. You may say that the power of this depravity has been accumulating till it has become a terrible force in the course of the ages. Yes, but bear in mind that it has been balanced by a progressive development of the moral nature.

The latter force offsets the other—perhaps more than offsets the other. It is a question whether bad moral heredity is transmitted with the force which accompanies the good, whether nature is not predominantly benign, whether much charged to malign heredity should not go to the account of environment and habit.

We probably have as fair a trial as Adam or primitive man, and he with his rudimentary moral nature had no better chance than we, and probably no worse. But it is not my purpose to make a theological argument. All I make any detour in that direction for is to take away the clouds and darkness that have been grouped about the Eden story, so that without mental bonds and clamps and prejudice we may read that story in its own original native simplicity, truth and light.

And now, suppose some one meets you and imparts to you the confidential information that the Eden story is “a fable to be dropped as a tadpole loses its tail,” could you not find philosophy enough to say that what is true of all must be true of any, and so let your brilliant informer go his stupid way? But now, to put a summary briefly, if the experiences in the Eden story

are philosophical the man is philosophical—the whole matter is philosophical—was meant for philosophy. Let us read and interpret the old record as it was meant. That the experiences are philosophical, God's walking in the garden in the cool of the day ought to be sufficient proof. That is true taken as ethical psychology, otherwise not.

But there is a more ultimate reach to philosophical history yet, and some author in Genesis has pushed his venturesome way yet further back. What were the fortunes and experiences of primitive man? That is a great question. But what preceded man? That is a great question, yet more ultimate. That question is boldly faced and a plain answer given it in the first chapter of Genesis. I have never seen an exposition of that first chapter satisfactory to myself. I do not expect to give one that will satisfy others, for I have my unsolved problems. But I have found more satisfaction in treating that chapter as philosophic history than from any other mode of interpretation. Two elements hover over that composition and compel its present form—God and man—and the relations of religion subsisting between them.

First and foremost in the thought of the writer is God. Then next comes man made in the image of God. The world and all it contains is an abode fitted up for the use and welfare of man.

I do not think the first chapter of Genesis was ever intended to set forth a scientific order of thought according to modern conceptions. It was intended to set forth a religious order of thought, or a philosophical order of thought as that would be determined by religion. I do not know that I can make this distinction very plain, but I think it will grow plain. It is said that there is a remarkable correspondence between the order of creation or of evolution set forth in Genesis, and the teachings of science. But I think that correspondence was worked out from a religious base rather than from one scientific. For instance, science shows that the evolution of man was a very late affair, and so does Genesis. But the author of Genesis drew his inference out of religion, drew it rather from the base of his inner consciousness, while the scientist draws his the rather from objective observations upon nature.

Let us see how the Genesis inference might come. Man as a moral being capable of com-

munication with God by his moral nature is the highest creature in the order of being on this earth. It is a conclusion of religion, and I beg leave to say a correct one, that all things are subservient to the interests of this moral being, all things were made preparatory for his coming and for his use. Take the attitude of the Psalmist. Question: "What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?" Answer: "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea; and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." The philosophy of that Psalm is substantially parallel with the philosophy of the first chapter of Genesis. Indeed, much of the phraseology is common to the two writings. The religious feeling embodied in that Psalm would compel an account of creation to take the form presented in Genesis. It would compel the appearance of man to be last on the face of an earth fitted up for him and fitted with all things for his

use. You know that poetry has proved itself one of the best of philosophic interpreters of nature. If Darwinism is true, yet Lucretius sung it two thousand years before Darwin was born. Why may not ethics or morals or religion—all radically one—be as good an interpreter of nature as æsthetics? It seems to have proved itself so in this case. Let us give speculative thought a little room in this matter. Do not despise that word “speculation;” there may be help in it as in theory or hypothesis. I like to hold to the notion of the Mosaic origin of this first chapter of Genesis—no matter where the other documents of which the book is composed, came from.

It contains a philosophy which no one was so likely as Moses to put at the head of the religion to which he gave order and law. Moses had a philosophic mind, and he had a wonderful opportunity to exercise it. Mr. Darwin was about fifty years of age when he published his book on the origin of species. He had thought about the matter and worked at it all his life till that time. But Moses had a mind as alert as Darwin’s. At forty years of age he was driven into the wilderness, and there he remained till he

was eighty years of age, in the close companionship of God and nature in his capacity of shepherd. It was said of him when forty years more had passed over him that his eye was not dim nor his natural force abated.

Matthew Arnold held a free lance, hear him:

“What bard,
At the height of his vision, can deem
Of God, of the world, of the soul,
With a plainness as near,
As flashing as Moses felt,
When he lay in the night by his flock
On the star-lit Arabian waste;
Can arise and obey
The beck of the spirit like him?”

There were forty years, then, of such a man with such powers and with such religious attitude of mind in contact with nature.

Out of such circumstances, or of some man of and in such circumstances, we ought to expect the philosophy of this first chapter of Genesis to come. Give credit for some observation. He lives upon his flocks and herds; they live upon plants. There is the order of the introduction of vegetable and animal life and of the life of man before him. That is simple, but it is all there. Other conclusions are not very

remote, certainly not that the beginning is chaos and that the beginning of effort is toward order in matter.

There is one stumbling block which I think will cease to be a rock of offense when you approach it from the point of religious philosophy rather than from that of bare science. I refer to the astronomical work of the fourth day.

The treatment of the whole subject of astronomy must have been determined by religious considerations. The author was not balancing the niceties of knowledge actual or possible. The religion of Egypt would have begun its philosophic history of creation thus:

“In the beginning Osiris, or the sun, created all things.”

In Egypt the sun was God. It would be necessary to enter some very determined protest against that idea. The tendency among the children of Israel would be to revert to the worship prevalent in Egypt. Indeed, what heathen nation has not had its sun worship? Now see how the author of Genesis I. managed this matter: he has dethroned the sun and enthroned God; he has exalted man by making the sun, instead of man's god, man's servant. Probably

the greatest step ever taken in the emancipation of man from superstition was the very degradation of the sun from a Divine position to the subordinate position in which he is placed in this chapter. It will pay us to have before our minds the whole of the record.

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; and he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth; and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.”

The particularization of the objects in view over and over again would have the effect to beat into the minds of the children of Israel that the heavenly bodies were no gods, but that they were humble servants of themselves—the producers for them of seasons, the markers of time, lamps to light the day and the night. That is

a correct assignment of the functions of the heavenly bodies from a religious point of view, especially when it is directed against a tendency to deify these bodies.

Do you say that science laughs at such philosophy because the sun is so much greater than the earth and the earth is a mere satellite of the sun? Well, is science so crude of soul as to worship the huge in size instead of the complete in process? Mechanical power instead of spirit?

To religion moral beings must always be the center of the universe. To ethics and philosophy the universe is homocentric. I stood by the open door of a blast furnace with my friend by my side. The furnace was larger than my friend; there was very much more physical power represented in the processes going on in the furnace than there was in the body of my friend. Had my friend been cast into the furnace the heat would have licked him up in a few seconds like a shaving.

Yet my friend held a very much higher rank in my estimation than did the furnace. In fact, the furnace was the servant of my friend. This earth bears fourteen hundred millions of men highly organized physically, finely tuned men-

tally. I shall take off my hat to them and not to the huge furnace that heats them. They are the more finished product.

God must have the feeling that we have in this matter, only in infinitely greater degree, in tenderness infinitely sublimed. That is the philosophy of religion. The author of Genesis caught it and gave it setting in the brief though majestic philosophic outline of the processes of God in matter and nature before the introduction of man on this earth—gave it out of religion and to religion. In the forum of religion it is a just and true account, and will remain so—whatever science may discover or prove—"till the heavens be no more."

NOTE I.

Inasmuch as you cannot describe everything all at once, why is it not just as well to put off to a fourth place in the order of description work done on the sun and stars as to treat that matter in any other place in a cosmical treatise?

One thing is certain—when you consider the end in view of a sun or planet to be, ultimately, ability to support life upon itself, and to be the abode of moral beings, if completion is six, the

earth was three parts out of six nearer to completion than the sun, when life appeared. Indeed, are we not at liberty to say scientifically the earth was half finished before work on the sun had advanced as far as it had gone at the close of the earth's first day? The sun may have a day in court, but he has hardly had one yet.

With the fear of Sydney Smith before my eyes, I would not speak disrespectfully of the sun or the equator. But the fact is that the sun is a huge waste-basket into which everything has been tumbled that was not caught and finished elsewhere. Whether the sun can be utilized in itself for higher purposes is guess-work. But I do not charge this speculation up to the author of Genesis. He probably knew nothing about it and would not have cared for it if he had. It was out of the range of his purpose. Again, I do not mean to play the role of a harmonist. I am impressed with the wisdom of the following extract from J. Clerk Maxwell: "The rate of change of scientific hypothesis is naturally much more rapid than that of Biblical interpretations, so that if an interpretation is founded on such a hypothesis it may help to keep the hypothesis

above ground long after it ought to be buried and forgotten.

“I think the results which each man arrives at in his attempts to harmonize his science with his Christianity ought not to be regarded as having any significance, except to the man himself, and to him only for a time, and should not receive the stamp of society. For it is the nature of science, especially of those branches of science which are spreading into unknown regions, to be continually changing.”

NOTE II.

I do not want to be understood as holding that there are two orders of truth for the same facts, one religious and the other scientific, and that what is true in the one may be false in the other. But the vision may subordinate the one department to the other, even sinking important truths of the one out of sight, or neglecting their proper order, for emphasis of a purpose immediately in view in the other. It would be strange if this were not done in the first chapter of Genesis. The scientific view was certainly secondary in the mind of the author. Yet no scientist would treat with scorn such scientific

ideas as chance to come to expression in a document so synthetic in execution and purpose. Both science and religion probably do violence to the intent of the author in holding him to such sharpness of distinction between event and event, or action and action, definition of means and modes, as is customary in comment. The further light that is to break out of God's word will doubtless come, not from strict dramatic or etymologic treatment of the text, but from divining the philosophic thought lying in it. It will so probably come nearer interpreting the author. Criticism now falls on the text. The author's thought was sweeping over an infinite system, and he ought not to be held to nicety in æonic punctuation.

XI.

THE STORY OF EDEN AND THE PAR- ABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

THE highest, last, and best form of religious instruction is contained in the New Testament. It is true in one sense that having the New Testament we do not need the Old. Paul said of the Old Testament, that it was "able to make wise unto salvation." That is much more true of the New—even of the writings of Paul himself. The Gospels are a better guide of salvation than the Psalms. Paul is a better teacher of the way of life than any or all of the old prophets. The New Testament is fruit or flower on the tree of religious knowledge. But fruit or flower is borne on stem and root, and one would be remarkably wanting in the higher and better elements of intellectual life who should pluck fruit to gratify his taste, or a flower to delight his eye, and take no notice of the branch or stalk on which it grew. One's knowledge is not com-

plete respecting a flower till he has carried his observations from flower to leaf, from leaf to twig, from twig to branch, from branch to trunk, from trunk to root and from root to all underground ramifications. Such inspection gives one knowledge of more than a flower. It discloses to one a system—a perfected whole—a plant in its entirety. We should not have the fruit of the New Testament unless we had the stalk and the underground roots of the old.

One must study the Old Testament in order to have a complete system of knowledge respecting the Christian religion. One will find not merely intellectual knowledge out of this study, but he will meet, all along, the germs of those moral truths which take on such high and beautiful coloring in the New. One will find as he reads the Old Testament, that he is not only increasing his historic knowledge, but that he is coming in contact with those salvatory moral elements which Paul said could be found there. Neither intellectually nor morally, then, can we afford to discard the Old Testament.

It is very difficult to execute what ought to be one of the first functions of a Christian minister, to wit, to read and expound the Scriptures to

the people. Custom is mightier than any man—mightier than we all combined. Custom has decreed the reading of one chapter or snatches from several at a service. There are so many chapters in the whole Scriptures that this reading can never be anything else than fragmentary. If one has only the knowledge of the Scriptures which he hears read in church he will never get any very definite idea of the Scripture system. Each chapter will be a sort of proverb standing by itself. One cannot make up a connected whole, a system, out of such isolated reading. I am compelled to fall back, then, on exhortation to private reading of the Scripture.

Many of you are far advanced in intellectual culture. You know the rank of the Scriptures on the scale of intellectual possessions. I have no need to speak about the desirableness of perfecting knowledge on this line. Many of you have read the Scriptures many times. I wish to suggest that it would be well still to make an excursion over the whole field of the Bible. You can read rapidly. Some one says the whole New Testament could be read in a forenoon.

I especially entreat the young people to take up the Old Testament for private reading and

not to lay it down till they have come in order to the last verse of Malachi. The novel and the magazine and modern history have charm and value. But if you will take hold of the Old Testament with resolution and read it through, twenty or thirty years from now you will say you could not have put your time to better service even for your intellectual development.

It takes will to do it. But just what you need is culture of the will. You want an athletic will—one that will bear a long, strong strain. You will never get this without an exercise, a gymnastic, adapted to the result. You will never know whether you have a continuous will or not till you have done something which proves to you that you have such a will—a will you can trust. To take the Old Testament and against all temptations of all sorts to hold yourself through book after book till you have finished the whole, is one of the best exercises for a faculty which a great many persons credit themselves with possessing but which very few persons really have. You will tell me, if you read the Old Testament through, if you have not got religion out of the effort, that you have the most satisfactory conviction you ever had of

your self-control—self-mastery—and that is a long way on the road to religion.

I hope the time taken in this exordium and exhortation will not hinder turning thought to the real subject we have in hand. Your opinions respecting many things in the Old Testament will change. I regard it as desirable that they should change. The alternative, I think, is change of view from that which has been held in respect to many things, or repudiation—change of view or the rocks of Ingersollism. You can make many very radical changes and come out with your reverence for the Old Testament not diminished but strengthened.

I have put at the head of this discourse two titles: "The Story of Eden," and "The Parable of the Prodigal Son." I regard these titles as equivalent. You may put the sign of equality between them. The story of Eden is the first version of the parable of the prodigal son. They represent parallel transactions. They both teach the same thing and were meant to teach the same thing, to wit, the experiences and fortunes of all human souls in their path of alienation from God.

The parable of the prodigal son is not par-

ticularly a historic fact—was never meant to set forth a particular historic fact. It does set forth something which transpires in the moral consciousness of every man. The historic form which it takes on is mere stage scenery, intended to give vividness to the moral action to which attention is demanded. Would it not be thought somewhat ridiculous if we were to send an exploring expedition to hunt up the home of the man who had the two sons; to resurvey the boundaries of the field where the boys and the servants worked; and to locate the pen in which the fatted calf was kept; to trace the road the younger son took when he went into a far country; to locate that country and to find the tomb of the citizen to whom the young man joined himself; to attempt to work out the historic background of this parable as though it were veritable fact? Would not common sense come to the rescue of most people and show them they were off the lines of right interpretation of the parable? We all get hold of the right method of interpretation of that parable in a prayer meeting. We verify that parable not by appeal to it as the history of a definite case, but by an appeal to our own moral consciousness to

see if we do not find therein the moral transactions in the parable set forth. Who was the prodigal son? Was he a particular man—whose name was Elnathan, and whose father's name was Ben Levi?

No, the prodigal son is any man—is every man that ever came to the surface of moral discrimination. Who called for his goods and went into a far country? You and I. What is it to call for our goods and go into a far country? Alas, you and I know! We know what it is to take our lives in our own hands and set up independently of God. In what year did that famine take place? Alas, in every year since man was endowed with a moral nature, and in every time of every year when a man has wandered away from God! Where did that famine take place? In every soul of man that ever sinned against God. And it will take place to the end of time in every soul of man that doeth evil. In that land a mighty famine will always arise.

That critical point—he came to himself—in whose bosom was that point located? In the bosom of every man who has repented of sin and turned to righteousness and God. The journey home, the compassion of the father, the

subsequent reinvestment in sonship, the rich clothing and the feast—why, the very children have experienced all this within themselves whenever they have repented of a wrong or a sin. They are not thrown off the track when the parable of the prodigal son is read to them. Every man knows the road and the facts of the departure, if he does not of the return. And there are certain living presumptions within him, of which he can never dispossess himself, that he would find the story of the return to be true if he would only return.

We have no difficulty in interpreting this parable when we take it into the field of the moral consciousness. There we find the historic facts in our own being. They are not some one's else facts. They are ours. It is our history that is told in the departure and in all its fortunes. The squalor, the want, the hunger, the degradation of sin, the companionship of swine—where is the theater of this experience? In all human souls that sin against God; and "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

I hope we have clear the method of interpretation of this parable of the prodigal son and

where it is that we go to verify it. The theater of experience and verification is in the soul of every man.

Before I go back to the old version of this parable there are two preliminary questions of which I want to make disposition. Suppose some exceedingly wise man comes along and says to me, "Don't you know that the parable of the prodigal son is a myth?" What would it be wise for me to do? Fly into a perturbation, if not into a passion, and tell him, "No, it is not"? Would it not be better to ask him what a myth means. And when he answers, as he must, that a myth is something which men have told, and told because it is usually a bit of universal or typical experience, I can say, "Very good; I am much obliged to you for your term; the parable of the prodigal son is something which men tell because they know it, part of it all too well and part all too ill, but it is a bit of universal knowledge." I see the term may cover the ground of truth for the verification of which a man commonly explores the field of consciousness within and not the historic realm without. Do we lose anything by calling the parable of the prodigal son a "muthos"? What

other speech is there that compares with it in the reach and absoluteness of its truth? And now our critic is on his feet once more. Behold what childish anthropomorphism! How silly to represent God as a man walking in a garden! It may be that the critic is the child in the case. It may be that the writer knew what he was about and that the critic does not. "There were giants in the earth in those days." There were men of strong thought—men who knew how to pack a truth so as to make it portable; so that it could be carried down the ages, so that men would "tell" it, men who knew

"Truth in closest words shall fail
When truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors."

Men have deified, theosized the term Logos; we need not fear to make Muthos anthropic, i.e., make it co-extensive with man. If Muthos is a tale that men tell because men can recognize it when told them, that is the tale to tell. Thank God for the Muthoi—the tales men have told and always will tell.

There are those who deny the fall of man. Can a man deny the universal applicability of the parable of the prodigal? If the parable of

the prodigal son is of universal application, then the fall of man is a truth. Every man knows in his own consciousness that he has called for his portion of goods and departed into a far country; that there his goods have been wasted and the famine has come. Every man has reason to suspect that this has been the experience of his neighbor. That is a fall. That necessitates a universal fall—a fall of the first men as well as the last. If there was a man or men to begin with who had not this experience, then he or they were so far removed from us that we cannot call them our brethren. We belong in a race that would know individually by experience the first part of the parable of the prodigal son. It is no answer to say that man began low and has been gradually climbing. That is a general truth with regard to man's experience. He did begin low, in that, and he has been climbing up. But that is not the line we are on. However low man began morally, he found a lower depth—and that is a fall. However small the capital with which man began morally, he called for that little and went by himself into a far country and made it less and the famine came—and that is a fall. The

race has its consciousness of fall. And the first man or men had his or their share in the consciousness of the race.

Adam, were he individual, or a tribe, or primal man generic, had reason from his or their own moral conduct to know the meaning of the parable of the prodigal son. It is idle to say that the first men had not risen—that that was all the matter. There never was a man of them that staid up morally as far as he got. There is not a fact in the universe so easy of proof as that of the fall of man. It is hard to prove the existence of the external world. But it is not hard to prove to a man what has transpired in his own soul. You may, if you choose, object to the use of the word proof in reference to a self evidencing fact. Put it in another way—you may say a man cannot deny what his own soul asserts.

There is one other collateral truth at which we will take a glance. Suppose the prodigal son, when he was in that far country, had met and married a prodigal daughter and they had reared children there in their business of swine tending, and they too had come up and married similarly and continued in the same busi-

ness, do you not suppose that there would have been developed a strong tendency to get out into more remote countries and engage in business even more debasing than swine tending? But are we not here on the track of two truths, the truth of bad heredity attested by science and of depravity attested by religion?

The parable of the prodigal son is possibly a key to a great deal more than we have supposed. Now suppose we carry this method of dealing with the parable of the prodigal son back to the story of Eden. Of course the very thing at issue is to settle upon the basis on which we are to treat that story. Are we dealing therewith simple, plain, unvarnished historical fact, or are we dealing with an illustrative statement of moral experience as in the parable of the prodigal son? Is what is stated in historic form the main thing to be kept in mind, or is the historic form mere setting—mere stage scenery, for which anything else might be substituted—for the exhibition of deeper moral truth? In other words, are we to insist on the actual verity of the historic setting in one case more than in the other? It seems to me that the case is plainer with the Eden story than it is with the parable of the prodigal

son. If everything is true to the letter in the Eden story, then it becomes at once a history of an experience so far removed from ours that we have nothing in common with it and cannot be instructed by it. It is a history of fortunes and fates in some other world than this.

Just think a moment. Did the knowledge of right and wrong grow on a tree, so that a man might pluck off the fruit of that tree and the eating it tell him what was right and what was wrong?

Did immortality grow on another tree, so that a man might put forth his hands and eat of the fruit thereof and become immortal in spite of the Almighty? Do you not know that you are dealing with metaphors—figures here, just as you are in the parable of the talents or of the sower and the seed? To find out the meaning of all this you are not to go back and speculate on some primitive historic condition, but to go into your own soul and see if you cannot find out some meaning on the side of your own moral consciousness.

Do women go out nowadays and hold conversations in good round English with serpents, the serpent meanwhile speaking as good Eng-

lish as the woman? Do you suppose a snake and a woman ever carried on a conversation in good round Hebrew or any other tongue of human speech? Is it customary for temptations to sin among us to come from the suggestions of the conversations of serpents? The serpent is figure for the wily, intrusive, seductive power of temptation—for what, try as much as we please, we can do no better than to designate as the serpentine character of temptation. We do not have any trouble when we read in Hamlet:

“But know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father’s life
Now wears his crown.”

If the serpent in the Eden case is to be a real animal, a real ophidian, then I think it necessary to make all Jesus’ parables not supposed cases, but a recital of absolute historic facts.

The swine in the parable of the prodigal son were not mere symbols of degradation taken up by the Saviour for illustration, but actual swine, as actual as the herd that “ran violently down a steep place into the lake” at Gadara. Did God in literal verity have a habit of walking in a garden in the cool of the day? The Infinite does somewhat different from that in these days. A flaming sword was placed at the east of Eden.

Now Eden ought not only to be found, but that flaming sword ought to be found there still, for the plain implication of the Scripture is that it was never taken away. It would be likely to be an object prominent enough to have been discovered by this time if it were a thing of sense. It was and is a thing of spirit, as we shall see.

I have done a little destructive work on this Eden story, not for the sake of destruction, but for the sake of defense and construction. It amounts to something with a skillful general on what ground he draws up his lines. I believe there is a line of impregnable defense of the Eden story. But now shall we call this story an old wives' fable? Then the story of the prodigal son is a fable of the old wives' sort. That we are not willing to allow. Is this story a myth? Men surely have told this story. Call it a myth, you do not by that term put it out of the category of the inspired truth of God, any more than you can so put out the parable of the prodigal son.

There may be something of the historic in the background of the Eden story. I do not know but that there was a first man whose name was

Adam and a first woman whose name was Eve. But the Scriptures on their face treat these terms as designations of man and woman generally; certainly they treat them so in this Eden story. Adam is "the man"—man generic, as "the ox" is ox generic. This is not biography, but history writ large—universal history, history of moral experience, what has been true of every man, what must have been true of the very first.

A moral nature wakes up to find within itself certain permissions and certain restrictions. The inward voice says: "Thou mayest," and, "Thou shalt not." Coupled with the "Thou mayest" there is life. Coupled with the "Thou shalt not" there is death. These are the most important facts and laws of the universe. They are what God holds to, with more firmness than to anything else. They are the great trees of the garden, "the tree of life" and the tree of "the knowledge of good and evil." This latter for brevity's sake we will call the tree of the knowledge of evil. One always had the liberty to know all the good he could. But he had no right to mix his knowledge of good with a knowledge of evil. Wrong man should not do. Sin man should not know. There is a prohibition in every man's soul. It was in Eden, in the soul of the first man.

That most radical of all the religious experiences we have—that protest against wrong and sin—was in the breast of the first moral agent. The first man knew the “absolute imperative” in his being as well as Kant or we. What happens? The man who obeys the prohibition lives. But every man questions what is this prohibition—why may I not see what is on the other side of wrong as well as what is on the other side of right? I do not like this restriction; I will do as I please. I will not listen to fatherly counsel; I will call for my portion of goods and go into any country I please and set up by myself. The temptation has been one and the same, and all souls have yielded to it—the first man did and the last man has. Does not temptation to sin always come in this serpentine guise—this prohibited thing would be pleasant—I want just the knowledge, just the experience which lies behind that prohibition?

Now graphic beyond power of an amending touch is the form in which the Eden story puts the cause and consequences of temptation. The fruit forbidden seems, under the suggestion of temptation, to be good for food, to be pleasant to the eyes, and to be desired to make one wise.

So temptation has painted and gilded for all time. A little touch by the way—vice and sin are not always, not often solitary. They are social in their nature. We influence one another. What seems desirable to one he will make known to another.

The intimate relationships of life are likely to unify moral experience. What the wife chooses the husband will choose. Our dearest companions may be our tempters. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."

The fruit is eaten. The prohibition is disregarded. The absolute imperative is unheeded. We have known sin—have made it our own. What is behind wrong we have discovered. Ah! what have we discovered? Oh, the poverty of it! The wretchedness of it! The shame of it! The soul is naked. It would hide and be covered.

The Hebrew term for atonement is a term which means, to cover.

The soul must do something. It must cover up its shame. Is not that what comes to pass in every human soul when he mixes his knowledge of good with knowledge of evil? Is not that what lies behind the disregard of any Divine prohibition? Is not that what lies behind the

knowledge of wrong? This is the first perturbation of sin. But that is not all. Calmer moments come, only to bring us more solemn reckoning. God walks in the garden in the cool of the day with every human soul. He asks for an account of its doings. The hours of reflection come. Things are seen in their true light, and yet the sinning soul will not let the light shine. Men hide themselves from the Divine inspection. They will not let the light shine upon their souls and their deeds.

What did Adam do in the garden, when he hid from the Lord, but what all souls try to do when they attempt to escape the consequences of their sins? "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." That is true with us. That was true with the first man. No better parable form of putting that sad truth can be imagined than by the representation of Adam trying to hide himself when he hears the call of the voice of the Lord.

Need I stop to comment on the consequences to man and to woman of sin? How has the earth been cursed by man's wrong! Its very fertility has departed from it. Populous places have become waste deserts. Over the fields dev-

astated by man's wickedness have come up thorns and thistles instead of the life-supporting grain. Not in trust and rest upon his fellow has man tilled his fields, but in anxiety and fear.

And when the grain has ripened and he has reaped it, robbers have carried it off, made slaves of his wife and children, and left his corpse to be blackened and burnt in the smoking stubble.

Out of sin has come to woman—the mother—anguish not only at the beginning but through all her motherhood. Under sin her life has been blasted and she has descended from the position of an endeared help at his side, a rib taken from his side, to the position of a slave beneath his feet. The despotism of man over woman is the despotism of sin. A terrible despotism it has been, and a terrible despotism it still is, where wrong and sin reign. There are one or two more moral elements in this Eden story to which I must call attention. The Lord God prevents the man who has sinned from putting forth his hand and taking of the tree of life.

Well, what is that but a recognition of the great law that righteousness shall have its rewards and sin its retributions—that the one shall not have the awards of the other? “Say ye to

the righteous that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him." The soul that sinneth, it shall die. It shall not grasp the fruit of righteousness, which is life. Sin shall have its own fruit—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish. Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death. By no means shall it lay hold on eternal life. Did I say there is no sword flaming over some particular spot of land in the east? But the sword that was put at the east of the Eden of human consciousness, flames there still. We talk about salvation. Salvation can do some things, but some things it cannot do.

We assert the necessity of atonement. Atonement can do some things, but it cannot do all. Whoever goes out of the Eden of innocence, of sinlessness, finds some things barred from him forever. Nothing can restore them. He can get back to them in no way. A flaming sword forever debars him from that Eden.

There is something about sin which no atonement can cure. That is the misery of it, that is the fearfulness of it. A man may disown his sin and become a new man. A man's sins

may be atoned for and forgiven. But he will remember them forever. The memory of the degradation of committed sin will be one's memory with conscious being. We may find grace to help us bear the memory, but the memory we shall bear. Memory preserves the scars of sin. When the prodigal son had been established in the honors of his father's home, do you not suppose he thought sometimes of those days in that far country—thought of his wanton profligacy, of the shame of it, of those days of poverty and wretchedness and degradation, and reflected that they were his days, that he had lived them, that they had stamped their woeful impress upon his being? You cannot divide the continuity of human life. You cannot retain consciousness and smother memory. Step out of the Eden of innocence into sin, and there is a flaming sword in your own memory that will prevent your regaining your former estate of consciousness—of sinlessness. There is the fearfulness of sin—the eternal bar of the flaming sword that springs up behind it. Therefore let us sin not. Let us taste of no fruit which God forbids. Then we shall eat of the tree of life. The gates of pearl “shall in no wise be shut.”

Away from the flaming sword to the open gates
and the streets of gold let us hasten.

“Paradise, and groves
Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old
Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should they be
A history only of departed things,
Or a mere fiction of what never was?
For the discerning intellect of man,
When wedded to this goodly universe
In love and holy passion, shall find these
A simple produce of the common day.”

WORDSWORTH.

The Recluse.

XII.

PSALMS NOT IMPRECATORY.

Is it not a little strange that we should customarily turn to the Psalms for an introductory exercise in worship? We do it not from any external compulsion. We do it solely because we are impressed with the unrivaled fitness of the Psalms to express religious feeling. We are not alone in this impression. The Christian church, turning to the Old Testament, opens ten times at the Psalms to once in any other book.

Though not the author of them all, David has been held to be the author of so large, or so characteristic a portion of them, that the whole collection has passed usually under his name, as *The Psalms of David*.

The problem presents itself to the thinking mind—whence did this man derive his power to lead men in all ages and in all countries in the worship of God? How came David so near to

God's heart that the pious and the worshipful of all time should feel that he has best framed what their own hearts would utter?

If you will read over the life of David, you will find nothing miraculous in it. The whole history is peculiarly of the earth, earthy. I call attention to that fact as showing, contrary to a somewhat common impression, not the lavishness but the economy of miracle on the Biblical arena. God spake to David neither by audible voice nor by vision. His whole life seems to have been spent under the ordinary conditions of men. When you read his life and reign, the miraculous element comes out no more in them than in the case of any other monarch—say Charles V. or Cromwell, or in the case of any other warrior—Cæsar or General Grant. Yet David is the great choir leader of men as they swell their anthems of praise to God.

There is one feature of these Psalms of David that would give us some light upon the question asked if our attention were more closely called to it when we read them. I do not know that I can denominate this characteristic any better than by calling it a struggle for God, or, to put it in another way, a struggle for moral exist-

ence. David can lead us to God because he has fought over so much more of the way to God than we have. We read over the Psalms carelessly, without discovering how much they reveal. Nowhere else in all literature is so much of a man's religious experience revealed as in David's Psalms. Nowhere else are the lights and shadows that play over a soul in its religious life so delicately, faithfully, accurately touched.

It is to the shadows that I wish first to call attention. For the shadows we should look when we read the Psalms. God's face was not always visible to David. It was often hid behind a cloud, and the Psalms disclose to us the workings of his soul in his darkness. That attitude of mind is more prominent than any other in the Psalms. Then, in the darkness, came an intensity of struggle that we know nothing of. Nothing can be more pathetic than his pleadings with God in these seasons of loss of the Divine presence. Just look at: "Hide not thy face far from me. Put not thy servant away in anger. Thou hast been my help." How natural! A hope flushes in his bosom that God will befriend him because he has befriended him,

and he tells it to God as if to remind him that he had an interest in him by the amount of past blessing conferred. The plummet of religious pathos never went deeper down than here: "Leave me not nor forsake me, O God of my salvation." Whatever else that wrestling of Jacob with the angel might be, it was certainly a struggle of his own soul for a blessing from God. David lets us in to see struggles of his own equally intense. This, bear in mind, is probably actual experience: "I am weary with my groaning. All the night make I my bed to swim. I water my couch with my tears." We shall perhaps never see how much there is in that till we, conscious of the hidings of God's face, have worn away the weary hours of the night, till the stars have paled out in the light of day, storming the mercies of the Almighty that we may once more have their sweet possession.

He is not idly dallying with poetry who writes thus: "I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long. I am feeble and sore broken. Lord, my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from the." "Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; O Lord,

make haste to help me." We sometimes struggle to stay up our own selves, in our own hours of darkness and conscious separation from God. And we erect a staging for hope, and feel that we have something that we can trust, and then a whirlwind of desolation sweeps over us. All our work to stay ourselves is found as a broken reed, and we are prostrate in the dust, sensible only that we are prostrate and overwhelmed. How graphically, past all amendment, is this experience delineated in Psalm XLII.: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. O my God, my soul is cast down within me." And then the process goes on again of feeling for hope in his hopelessness by way of recalling God's mercies in past days to his children. Though he says, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God," yet God seems to have sent him away for the time with his longing still unsatisfied, with a sense of vacancy still in his soul, for he leaves the matter with the same sad refrain playing over his unsatisfied heart.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God." The soul is denied, yet it clings with a grasp unbroken to its hope. God tries us to see how much tension the cable of our attachment to him will bear, and so he does not always satisfy the hungry immediately with good things. We find an expression of that fact and of the proper attitude of the soul in it, in the hymn of George Croly:

"Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;
Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer."

He tried David in like manner, and the reason why David is a guide for us is that though baffled in his desire, though his heart was sunk within him, still no force could separate him from God, and his desolation echoes a manly willfulness as in it he still cries: "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God." I do not want to weary with quotations, but I want to use enough of them to impress the idea that a larger part of the Psalms, than we usually think, is written in the minor key.

“Be merciful unto me. Be merciful unto me, O God, for my soul trusteth in thee.” “My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed.” “Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire where there is no standing. I am come unto deep waters where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying; my throat is dried. Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee. Let not the water flood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me. Hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble; hear me speedily. Thou hast known my reproach and my shame and dishonor. I am poor and sorrowful. My heart is smitten and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread. For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping. My days are like a shadow that inclineth, and I am withered like grass.”

Then there is Psalm XXII.—a very dirge of the soul, forever consecrated to trial and distress by the Saviour’s quoting from it, if not reciting it, in the last moments of the cross: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Far

from helping me are the words of my roaring. O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou answerest not, and in the night season, but find no rest."

Jesus was no more son of David in the line of royal descent than in this very quality of acquaintance with sorrow and with struggle in the Divine life. So deep had David gone in this experience that the language which came out of it rose to the Saviour's lips when all his woes were culminating in death on the cross: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

It is only when we have looked in on these hymns of sorrow and trial and darkness that we can understand David, and see how widely he swept the lyre of human experience. Yea, it is only by studying the poems of this cast that we can appreciate those of a confident or jubilant vein. You can appreciate the light and trust and peace of: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; he maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters," only when you see it coming forth from a soul from whose background of darkness came: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" "Our fathers trusted in thee. They

trusted and thou didst deliver them. Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help." Then "The Lord is my shepherd" comes to us like the smiling sunlight streaming in after the passage of a black cloud, painting a bow of promise and hope on its retreating chill and gloom. And those triumphant strains of jubilation and delight: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," are incomputably magnified as expressions of the joy of God found, when you have paused to see that the soul thus jubilant has groped for God in the darkness, crying, "Hide not thy face far from me."

It is easy to see the difference between Isaiah and David. The difference is as marked as between a speech of Burke and a song of Burns. The difference is not merely in the fact that Isaiah is an epic while David is a lyric poet, for Isaiah himself sometimes touched the lyre. But Isaiah is essentially epic even when his style is lyric. It is the heart of a patriot and a statesman that finds utterance in all his song. David's lyrics are a personal utterance. They are denationalized. They know no country and no

political problems. They are the cry of a lone soul to the lone God. God is the only God and David is the only man, and his song the breath of desire for friendship, trust, amity between these two beings—seraphim and cherubim and humanity else being dismissed from view. “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God”—gives you the mental attitude of David.

Now take a lyric of Isaiah: “In that day thou shalt say”—“Thou”—you see a third person beside Isaiah and God on the stage already. Who this third person is, we shall see by and by. “Thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord, for he hath done excellent things, this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou

inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

You find now who is the third person on the stage. It is "the inhabitant of Zion," and there come before you the throngs of Jerusalem, the people of Israel, and the nations of the earth—"the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah, the flocks of Kedar and the ships of Tarshish."

Your brief lyric strikes out into thought after all with the long swing of the epos. The history of this lyric of Isaiah is commentary confirmatory of the view we have before us. That lyric was the patriotic national song of Israel—"The Marseillaise," the "God Save the Queen," the "Hail Columbia," of the Jew. Its inspiration is social, not personal; it is a song of the people, not a song of the soul. You read: "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." You will understand the situation of affairs if you think of Jesus as thus crying at the close of a jubilant ceremony in which the priests drew and poured water on the ground as lavishly and as fast as they could, while the people sang this lyric of Isaiah, beating heaven with the strength of their choruses:

"With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation," and, "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

It is going out of my way, but I cannot forbear to take one step aside here. What conflict of thought must there not have been in the mind of Jesus as he heard the people sing this lyric of Isaiah? If the traditions that come to us are trustworthy (good for anything), the fathers of this same people had "sawn" Isaiah "asunder" for uttering this lyric and other thought of kindred import. The fathers killed and the children canonized. Is it any wonder that you read: "Woe unto you Pharisees, hypocrites; ye build the sepulchers of the prophets and garnish the tombs of the righteous. Ye are the sons of them that slew the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers." And they did fill up the measure of their fathers. Israel put Isaiah to death, and after seven hundred years they sang his songs. So stood that situation. The Jew and the Roman put Christ to death, and after eighteen hundred years Lowell writes:

"For Humanity sweeps onward: where to-day
the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver
in his hands;

Far in front the cross stands ready and the
crackling fagots burn,
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent
awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's
golden urn."

So stands the latter situation.

But my detour is illustrative. I have developed this relating to Isaiah for purposes of comparison. "I love a prophet of the soul," says Emerson. To all time David will be the poet of the soul in the realm where it "lives in God" or hungers because of his absence. We dwell alone. A few signs pass between us and our friends interpretative of some few things. But there is an abundance of life from which and to which goes no speech or sign save as communication exists with the All-seeing. David is the choir leader of men as in this "undiscovered country" they frame to consciousness the aspirations and the songs of the soul. David leads us in worship because he represents the personal element in human experience so broadly and so well; its height, but its depth as well; its sunshine and its storm; its light and its darkness; its hope and its fears; its peace and its unrest; its joy and its anguish; its possession of God and

its wild beating against the bars of eternal silence to be let into the Divine bosom.

There were sins on David's escutcheon? But do not these Psalms show it, confess it? Aye, do they not show what no history can show, what is behind all sins? Do they not show the struggle of a soul with its torments—show its unrest, its upheavals and insurrections against the thralldom of sin and a never dying struggle back for the light, for purity and for God?

Carlyle, in his "Heroes and Hero Worship," says: "Who is called the man after God's own heart? David, the Hebrew king, had fallen into sins enough—blackest crimes. There was no want of sin, and therefore the unbelievers sneer and ask, 'Is this your man according to God's heart?' The sneer, I must say, seems to me but a shallow one. What are faults, what are the outward details of a life, if the inner secret of it—the remorse, temptations, the often baffled, never ended struggle of it—be forgotten? David's life and history, as it is written for us in those Psalms of his, I consider to be the truest emblem ever given us of a man's moral progress and warfare here below. All earnest souls will ever discern in it the faithful struggle of an

earnest human soul toward what is good and best. Struggle often baffled—sore baffled, driven as into entire wreck; yet a struggle never ended, ever with tears, repentance, true unconquerable purpose begun anew.”

The law was always the same that it is now in regard to vital knowledge of God: “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.” The old prophets had to fight their way as do we. With God there is no respect of persons. However God might sometimes give those manifestations of himself that we call miraculous, they were not the rule of God’s communication with the prophets any more than with us. And in David’s case there is no indication that God dealt with him in any but the ordinary way. We find David’s Psalms our spiritual life because he went through so many of the experiences which we must. Experiences so deeply human, we feel, put us on the right track to the Divine. And because David was human so deeply, God could meet him and bless him as almost no other. The greater we are, the more we can comprehend God. Struggle is the very element of our greatness. It stretches us out and enlarges us in the direction of our

strife. If God hid his face from David, by as much as David stretched forth his hands towards him in the darkness, by so much was his soul enlarged.

“The feeble hands and helpless,
Groping blindly in the darkness,
Touched God’s right hand
In that darkness
And were lifted up and strengthened.”

Let these old prophets and sacred bards be brought nearer to our sympathies. They were men of like passions with ourselves. They went down into the valley of humiliation as well as up on the heights of illumination. Were they favored of God? They lived where God’s favors come. They had a law of life, and in the long run the law asserted itself over all exceptions. They walked in darkness as well as in the light. What made them the appointed of God to teach mankind was, that they would walk whether it was darkness or light. I know of nothing more pathetic than the spiritual heart histories of these men, as set forth in their lives, descriptive of attempted communion with God.

That was real life when Elijah wandered off alone to Mount Sinai; if haply he might find God there as he thought he could not in Pales-

tine; if haply some Divine influence might linger round the old blast-swept crags beloved of lightning and storm, where God had held communication with Moses. It was a last resort for him in his darkness. It was the despairing act of a soul ready to die if he could not get a clearer revelation of God. We should look upon the God of the prophet and the psalmist as their God more as he is our God. Sometimes, perhaps, God appeared wondrously. But even then the true account of the matter seems to be that such appearance was in answer to wondrous effort after him. God might appear to us in some burning bush if we put forty years of our life into almost unbroken reaching out for him. After so many years of effort to lay hold of God, we might be fit for some special mission and might lead our host to a promised land. If we know nothing of God on the heights of his communication, it is because we know of no struggle after him in the depths of his silence. God found by persistently pushing through the darkness toward him, is God found forever. Nothing can then hide him from our eyes. If we are in thick darkness we know that it is "his pavilion round about him," and, though our vision be cut off,

we still trust because we have found him near. The Psalms show us the highest strains of rejoicing in God. But they come from minds that had sounded all possible depths of struggle and doubt. I am not sure but we may say David's light came *because* of his darkness. He was capable of perceiving what the light and joy of God's salvation are because he was capable of such intensity of feeling—capable of such "horror of great darkness" in the privation of light and joy in God. The darkness had some meaning to him because he knew whose absence the darkness betokened. Then light and peace came out in clearer colors to him because of the midnight gloom against which they were projected. The daysprings of peace and consolation take on their most beauteous hues as they break upon souls immersed in sorrow or despair.

Cowper in some period of depression, thinking God had forever departed from him, wrote:

"I consent that thou depart,
Though thine absence breaks my heart;
Go then and forever too,
All is right that thou wilt do."

Against such background what must not have been the comfort and joy when he could write:

“Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian while he sings;
It is the Lord who rises
With healing in his wings.
When comforts are declining,
He grants the soul again
A season of clear shining,
To cheer it after rain!”

*
If we have no rapture in the Divine life it is
because the deprivation of it means nothing to
us, it is because for it we have had no agony.

THE END.

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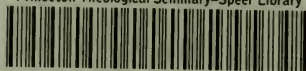
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